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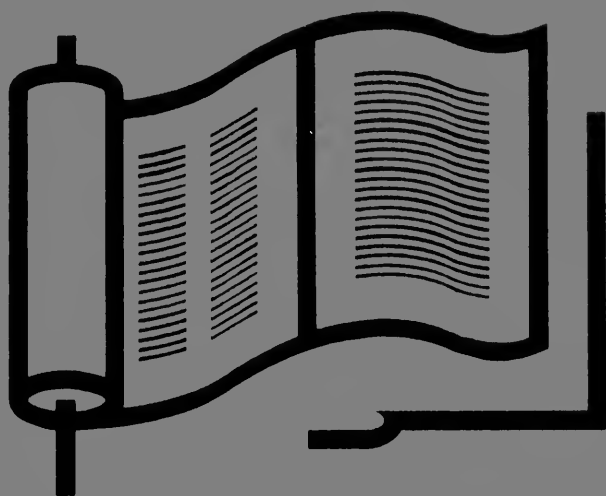


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DEATH IN LIFE: THE BOOK OF JONAH AND BIBLICAL TRAGEDY

BRANSON L. WOODARD

Literary analysis of the book of Jonah indicates a number of features found in the OT tragedies about Samson and Saul, as well as the tragic narrative of Adam and Eve. Relating Jonah to ancient Hebrew tragedy suggests a broader, more sophisticated expression of the Hebrew tragic vision than current research has shown and strengthens a reading of the book as history. This account of the prophet's experiences, moreover, displays impressive use of dramatic irony, which reveals the calamitous dimension of the downfall of a Hebrew protagonist. The recipient of a divine call to missionary service—and of chastisement for his obstinate disregard of Yahweh's grace—Jonah is a tragic figure whose spiritual estrangement throughout the narrative intensifies his death-in-life.

* * *

WHILE biblical and literary scholars continue to debate the authorship, purpose, and structure of various OT narratives, commentary on the book of Jonah retains a certain uniformity, keeping intact one assessment from the mid-sixties:

Controversies over The Book of Jonah have apparently all but ceased. One's viewpoint on the historicity of the "great fish" (ch. 1:17 [Heb., ch. 2:1]) no longer determines his orthodoxy or heterodoxy, and reference to Matt. 12:40 does not provide conclusive proof of the matter. That theological battle has been finished. There is even a remarkable unanimity on the interpretation of the book among Old Testament scholars. . . . It is agreed that the story is fictional and that the psalm in ch. 2:2-9 (Heb., ch. 2:3-10) is a later insertion.¹

¹Edwin Good, *Irony in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965; rpt. Sheffield: Almond, 1981) 39.

Scholarly consensus has its own persuasiveness, of course, partly because dissent must respond well to a number of crucial—and still unresolved—issues: the identity of the author and time of writing, his knowledge of other literature, and particularly the diversity of genres associated with the book of Jonah itself. Early in this century, for example, J. Bewer called it a “prose poem not history,” reasoning that the literary aspects of the book disqualify it from consideration as a factual account.² More recently, J. Miles has called the book parody,³ while A. Hauser classifies it as caricature, the work of a skillful narrator who uses the element of surprise to unify his plot. As the narrative unfolds, says Hauser, “the writer has progressively and deliberately destroyed Jonah’s credibility, making him one who strikes out too readily at the world when it does not suit him.”⁴ To be sure, his disgruntled attitude throughout makes for powerful drama; but H. W. Wolff’s hypothesis that the book is a five-act drama is inadequate.⁵ Equally troublesome are J. Kohlenberger’s phrase “parable-like composition” and J. Ackerman’s term “short story,” especially in light of Ackerman’s subsequent statement in the same article that “the elements in the narrative . . . bring it close to classical satire.”⁶ Elsewhere Ackerman and others, including J. Holbert and E. Good, have dealt at length with the pervasive irony in the book, extending our understanding of the narrator’s literary sophistication and rhetorical skill.⁷

²Hinckley Mitchell, John Smith, Julius Bewer, *The International Critical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912). Bewer speaks sharply against a reading that unites poetry and history: the book, he says, is “not the record of actual historical events nor was it ever intended as such. It is a sin against the author to treat as literal prose what he intended as poetry” (p. 4), “the work of poetic imagination, pure and simple” (p. 9).

Bewer’s view is shared by C. S. Lewis, who considered the book “a tale with as few even pretended historical attachments as *Job*, grotesque in incident and surely not without a distinct, though of course edifying, vein of typically Jewish humour” (“Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism”; *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967] 155).

³John A. Miles, Jr., “Laughing at the Bible: Jonah as Parody,” *JQR* 65 (1975) 168–81.

⁴Alan J. Hauser, “Jonah: In Pursuit of the Dove,” *JBL* 104 (1985) 36–37.

⁵H. W. Wolff, *Jonah: Church in Revolt* (St. Louis: Clayton, 1978). Like Bewer, Wolff rejects the Book as history, calling it “poetic fiction . . . comparable to Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son.” Thus, readers should not fight about historicity; the passage about the great fish, “like the whole book,” is “without question, work of the imagination” (p. 40).

⁶John R. Kohlenberger III, *Jonah and Nahum* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984) 19; James S. Ackerman, “Jonah” in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1987), 234.

⁷Edwin M. Good, *Irony in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965) 39–55; John C. Holbert, “‘Deliverance Belongs to Yahweh’: Satire in the Book of Jonah,” *JSOT* 21 (1981) 59–81; and James Ackerman, “Satire and Symbolism in the

All in all, commentary seems to move in one of at least two directions: toward a pluralistic response to the issue of historicity, primarily because several supposedly preposterous—therefore purely imaginary—events in the plot make the book a satire; or toward a one-dimensional view of the text as history, due in part to other biblical references to Jonah as an actual person, not as a fictional character (see 2 Kgs 14:25; Matt 12:40; Luke 11:29–32).⁸ With the former reading, critics assume that certain events could not happen and seek a way to explain the text accordingly. With the latter, the veracity of the narrative in Kings and Chronicles, the words of Jesus, as well as the OT prophets' fundamental concern with the historical nature of narrative, exclude any possibility that Jonah is a fiction.

This article does not attempt to resolve all issues regarding the genre and background of the book; it does, however, suggest an altogether different context for criticism of the book, based upon literary matters that have not been raised before—details that not only accommodate the flashes of irony, the compact structure, and various other poetic elements in the narrative but also point to sources that may have aided the author. In short, the book of Jonah has various features that appear in biblical tragedy. In the following discussion, I wish to show how these features follow the text, providing a firm literary base for the ironic statements in the plot; associate the author of Jonah with the Hebrew tragic vision; and show that a reading of the book as history is quite defensible.

Explication of a text is always more than mere plot summary. Nevertheless, to uncover the tragic qualities in the book of Jonah, especially in light of the various genres attached to it, an explication close to plot summary is necessary. In fact, such an approach, drawing upon the primary features of biblical tragedy—dilemma, choice, catastrophe, suffering, perception, and death⁹—will reveal a highly unified narrative about the dramatic descent of a proud prophet.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAGEDY IN THE TEXT

Jonah's dilemma is easy enough to identify. He must preach to the Ninevites as God has commanded or disobey the very One who has called Jonah and his countrymen the Chosen People. The former

Song of Jonah," in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith* (ed. B. Halpern and J. Levenson; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1981) 213–46.

⁸The most recent discussion is by J. H. Stek, "The Message of the Book of Jonah," *Calvin Theological Journal* 4 (1969) 23–50, defending the importance of historical perspective in prophetic narrative; but the article says far too little about the literary features of Jonah to refute the current view that the book is satiric fiction.

⁹Leland Ryken, *Words of Delight* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987) 145.

the safety of the prophets' own territory, Jonah is being sent *to* the Gentile people.¹⁰ His other alternative, however, is the infinitely more dangerous, unholy, and unloving option of refusing Yahweh's call altogether. That call, moreover, is based upon an awesome fact that intensifies Jonah's dilemma: the Ninevites' wickedness has "come up" to Yahweh, affronting His holiness. Thus, for Jonah to ignore his mission is to ignore his God—a crisis indeed, though the prophet has no excuse for disobeying Yahweh's command, regardless of the consequences.

No wonder, then, he flees to Tarshish (1:3). Twice in the verse, perhaps to achieve emphasis, the narrator states that Jonah fled from the Lord. Whether this emphasis is ironic is debatable. To be sure, no one can absent himself from the omnipresent One; therefore, Jonah's self-deluded attempt to run may be read as dramatic irony, the implicit contradiction between what a character says or does and what the reader knows to be true. Moreover, such discrepancy may embellish (rather than contradict) a presumed historical fact that one of Yahweh's prophets rebels against Him, seeking to avoid His will and presence, and thus reacts rashly (and irrationally) in a vain attempt to escape.

Jonah's choice is particularly noteworthy because it links his character with other OT tragic figures. Whereas Samson's tragic flaw was his lack of self-control (Judges 14–16) and Saul's, a rashness or proneness to extremes that eroded his ability to lead (1 Samuel), Jonah's was contempt fed by pride. He wanted the Ninevites to perish because, as Gentiles, they stood outside the camp of God's covenant blessing. Such insensitivity must have been intense to motivate a believer to turn away from Yahweh's call.

The prophet's choice soon leads to catastrophe, the divinely-sent storm (1:4–16), circumstances made all the more desperate by the tense dialogue between Jonah and the ship's crew. The narrator introduces this dialogue with a brief statement about the effects of the storm. Its ferocity could have split apart the ship, as could Yahweh's hand; but whatever damage would be sustained, the sailors were fearful enough to pray to their false gods and to part with various cargo so as to keep the ship afloat. All the while Jonah lay in a deathlike sleep, a detail that may suggest in a different way the extent of his insensitivity. Whatever the case, he is confronted by a series of questions (1:6, 8, 10), each of which reveals the speaker's desperation.

First the captain, rousing Jonah, asks, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish" (1:6).¹¹ This exclamatory question, heavily ironic because Jonah's God *sent* the storm, addresses not the obvious issue, how to

¹⁰Kohlenberger, *Jonah and Nahum*, 29.

¹¹This and all subsequent references follow the NIV (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985).

survive the wind and waves, but how anyone could be so oblivious to the imminent disaster. It is a question of shock and fear. Particularly striking is the narrator's silence; no mention of Jonah's reply follows, perhaps an indication that Jonah is disturbingly passive, especially in chapter 1.¹² What does follow is a brief description of the crew's casting lots in order to identify the culprit (v 7). After the lot falls on Jonah, the other men pose a series of questions to him, not rhetorical but genuinely expository ones: "Who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?" (v 8).¹³ Again, as with the captain, the crew focus their attention not upon the gale but upon the prophet, linking him with the storm. Some commentators argue that the narrator is using this situation, a crisis in which pagans are more discerning than a prophet, to satirize Jonah.¹⁴ But more likely, the men

¹²Hauser, "Jonah: In Pursuit of the Dove," 23: "Passivity . . . plays an important role in ch 1. Although Jonah's decision to flee (1:3) is certainly active, virtually everything else said about Jonah in ch 1 is passive." Thus, all are unwitting tools in Yahweh's hand.

This emphasis, however useful in analyzing the plot design, fails to consider Jonah as defensive, not just passive—perhaps not passive at all. First, Hauser downplays the significance of Jonah's decision to flee, the response that leads to the subsequent trials for himself and for the sailors. His blatant rebellion puts him on the defensive; he must protect himself. And he does so without fear of God or man. Such is not necessarily a passive stance. Second, certain remarks from Jonah are as much facts that he must acknowledge as they are tacit expressions of passivity. When he identifies himself as a Hebrew and a worshiper of Yahweh (1:9), he is simply explaining an earlier admission (1:10). Later, his reply to the sailors' question (1:11–12) is but the logical result of the preceding interrogation (1:6–10). He simply cannot now deny that his presence caused the storm and accompanying danger. Besides, as Hauser later admits twice (p. 26), Jonah's suggestion that the sailors throw him overboard is an "offer" of his own life for theirs, a display of Jonah's irrational thinking; in fact, these words anticipate his response after the sailors repent.

The question is whether a passive character makes such offers. Probably not, if indeed Jonah is motivated in part by his defensiveness—a sign not of weakness but of resolution, albeit ill-conceived.

¹³Good seems to be overreaching here, thereby obscuring the point of the sailors' questions. He calls the situation "wildly incongruous" that "in the midst of the howling storm, [the crewmen] request of Jonah a thumbnail autobiography" (p. 44). The questions, I would argue, are motivated by the drama of the moment; as Holbert notes, "The lots have already revealed the truth; Jonah is the guilty party. The questions of the sailors in v. 8 become highly significant in the light of their certain knowledge of Jonah's guilt" (p. 67). Moreover, the gravity of the circumstances would prompt the men to blurt out questions, not to await a systematic reply but to react to the perceived mysteries of Jonah's presence among them.

¹⁴See Holbert 66–67: "in a satiric piece it is the unexpected one who offers the expected solution [to crises involving divine judgment]. It is the pagan captain who suggests, 'perhaps that God will stir himself on our behalf in order that we do not perish.' Crying for help to the source of help may lead to help; that is good religion. The 'faithful' prophet of God never thought of it; or if he did, he surely did not act upon it . . . another famous pagan in the book, the Ninevite king, has nearly an identical suggestion in

are expressing the ancient tendency to assume that crises were divine judgments upon sinful deeds; therefore, their wisdom is syncretistic, not orthodox.¹⁵ At any rate, he identifies himself as a Hebrew and a worshiper of Yahweh, Creator of the sea as well as the land (v 9). How do these statements affect the crew? They are horrified and to show their terror raise the second of two rhetorical questions: "What have you done?" They knew already, from Jonah's own lips, that he was attempting to avoid Yahweh's presence (v 10), so the question is uttered in sheer panic.

The catastrophe worsens as the sailors turn their attention from Jonah's background to his threatening presence on the ship. Accordingly, they ask him what to do with him to still the waves (v 11), to which he replies, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea . . . and it will become calm." Then, perhaps to show his strength of mind, if not forcefulness of will, he accepts blame for the storm: "I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you" (v 12).

The most sensible response to these words is to throw Jonah overboard. But the narrator suspends that possibility and thereby heightens the catastrophe. The sailors know that Jonah's suggestion involves certain death for him and whatever his wrongdoing may be, death hardly seems appropriate; therefore, the crew try to row against the currents, unaware that God is increasing the winds. Facing an impossible task, the men finally abandon their efforts and throw Jonah into the sea, after which the storm subsides. But the catastrophe does not even end here. The crewmen think that they may have caused the death of an innocent man (v 14)—casting lots is hardly a foolproof

3:9. . . . Must the pagans teach the prophets proper religion? Apparently, *this* prophet needs teaching."

To begin with, one simply cannot assert that Jonah did not call upon God and that he may have. Trying to have it both ways is as unpersuasive as ever. Also, Jonah's need of teaching, or lack of it, is quite a different matter from the captain's wise counsel, an expression of his pagan religiosity. Certainly that counsel should be uttered by a Hebrew prophet such as Jonah, but Gentile religious invocations during a crisis hardly lead to only one conclusion, that the narrator is satirizing Jonah. On the contrary, why could not the narrator be reporting actual statements, the sum of which obviously underscores Jonah's spiritual faults? Indeed, this effect can be drawn from the mere unfolding of tragic narrative, without the literary apparatus of satire.

¹⁵Based upon a study of fourteen Hittite prayers, Walter Beyerlin found a noteworthy characteristic that occurs also in the OT (*Near Eastern Religious Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, trans. John Bowden [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978] 1966): the prayers, which are primarily argumentative, "are made from the basic conviction that a transgression against the deity will be punished by a visitation; conversely, a blow which falls on a community or an individual indicates a wicked action which has been committed recently or even longer before." Beyerlin then illustrates these concepts by citing Jonah 1, as well as 2 Sam 21:1ff., Ps 38:1ff., and individual speeches by Job's interlocutors. Whether the sailors were Hittite or not, recalling their mindset points clearly to the possibility that the narrator may not be ridiculing Jonah at all.

technique of determining a man's guilt or innocence—and fearfully offer sacrifices and make vows to God (v 16). Surviving the storm should be cause for revelry, but these sailors see nothing to celebrate. So ends chapter 1 in the Hebrew Bible, though English translations include the next verse: "But the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights" (1:17).

The prayer that follows, which George Landes has argued most compellingly as integral with the original text,¹⁶ dramatizes Jonah's suffering (2:1–8) and, later, his perception—the realization of a key insight, though that insight may not resolve all of his troubles (2:9–3:10).

Who can read Jonah's prayer without being moved by his suffering? His first words ("In my distress I called to the Lord") set the mood while subsequent phrases point to his physical torment and spiritual anguish. Images of death and burial pervade the pleas: Jonah calls to God "From the depths of the grave" (v 2), from "the deep" (v 3); this "deep" engulfs him, he says (v 5); even so, as he sinks down, he acknowledges that the Lord delivered him from the "pit" (v 6). Here the mood swings from suffering to hope, an important structural detail because chapter 3 focuses upon life, not death; and that life is an outworking of Jonah's perception during the three days in the belly of the fish.

The perception itself is the most pleasant part of the narrative. Jonah sings with thanksgiving to praise God from whom comes salvation (2:9).¹⁷ This strong claim attests to his courage and faith and

¹⁶"The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah," *Interpretation* 28 (1967) 3–30. Landes argues persuasively that 2:2–9 fits contextually into the prose narrative and therefore is a viable part of the original composition, not inevitably an interpolation from a later editor. First, he notes, we have no textual evidence that the book "ever circulated without the psalm" (p. 10), though he concedes that the earliest known text (from the late third century B.C.) still allows ample time for interpolation to occur. Then he cites the unifying function of the psalm: that it includes two prayers, rather than one, allows it not only to "describe Jonah's anguish after having been cast into the sea" and his "plea for deliverance" but also his "grateful praise for a past deliverance" (p. 15). Finally, Jonah's personality in the narrative has "nothing significantly disharmonious" with his personality in 2:2–9.

T. Warshaw, interpreting the book as satire, supports Landes on the integrity of the psalm as a part of the book, at least if viewed from a literary perspective: "Jonah's prayer presents difficulties, but from the point of view of the literary critic it contains many echoes of motifs in the story that surrounds it, making it an artistic part of the whole" ("The Book of Jonah," *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narrative*; ed. Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis with James Ackerman and Thayer Warshaw [Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1974] 192). Critics familiar with the Hebrew note additional literary artistry through vocabulary and various instances of word play.

¹⁷Landes, referring to the entire psalm, includes two other details as part of Jonah's perception (pp. 24–25), though not in the context of biblical tragedy, as I am arguing. First, Jonah realizes that this life-threatening incident at sea results not solely from his

presents him as anything but a passive man. At this point, Yahweh commands the fish to vomit the prophet on dry land; and it is so.

"Salvation comes from the Lord" indeed, and the recipients of that salvation include some of the most wicked people on earth, the Ninevites, as Jonah well knows (see 4:2). He admits such knowledge even before he fled to Tarshish. Thus when Yahweh extends a second call to preach to Nineveh (3:1-2), Jonah knows exactly what he must do; and his sensitivity has been raised considerably after three days in solitude, smelling gastric juices, seeing nothing. With short, direct statements, the narrator reports Jonah's obedient response, along with a description of his trip and the results (vv 3-10). Jonah's message too is short and direct ("Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned" [v 4]) and is the negative aspect of his positive statement inside the fish, "Salvation comes from the Lord." As Jonah issues God's warning, he witnesses the mighty deliverance of a brutal people whose king fasts, dons sackcloth, places himself at the mercy of God, and exhorts his subjects—including the animals—to do likewise, as a testimony of their contrition (vv 5-9). Sincere doubts about the inclusion of the animals have prompted some commentators to interpret this scene as grotesque and, literally, fantastic.¹⁸ But the narrator may have a different (nonsatiric) intention, to dramatize the depth of God's concern for the Ninevites and even for their animals, a compassion expressed also in the conclusion of the book:

the whimsical picture of the beasts of Nineveh wearing sackcloth and crying mightily to God, if it stood alone, might be dismissed as only a humorous embellishment of the narrative; but the closing words of the book, "and also much cattle," can be understood only as emphasizing the compassion of God for animals as well as men.¹⁹

rebellion or from the sailors' decision to throw him overboard but also from his chastisement by Yahweh. Second, he learns "a fundamental truth in the Israelite conception of death: death means radical separation from God, a sense of being bereft of the divine presence. . . ." Both details, I would suggest, contribute to the reading of Jonah as a tragic figure, shown divine truths but later (chaps. 3-4) rejecting them for the sake of his own interests.

¹⁸Good, 49-50 and Warshaw, 197.

¹⁹Millar Burrows, "The Literary Category of the Book of Jonah," in *Translating & Understanding the Old Testament* (ed. H. T. Frank and W. L. Reed; Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1970) 102.

That animals are described as sharing human experiences is not limited to Jonah 3:7-8 anyway. The prophecy of Joel refers to beasts engaged in moaning and suffering (1:18), "panting for" God (1:20), and being instructed not to fear past devastation of crops (2:20). Although the uncertain dating of Joel's prophecy (from the ninth century to a post-exilic period) makes any further connection between the two books mere conjecture, the similarity of the two descriptions of animals warrants further study.

Chapter 3, then, is not only a continuing part of the narrative but, for Jonah anyway, a striking commentary on the insight he has gained.

Of course, the literary artistry enhances this commentary, as it has strengthened the preceding accounts. One particularly powerful device is contrast: earlier, Jonah rebelled against Yahweh and went to an obscure western city; now he obeys and visits an "important" eastern one (3:3). Before, he was the cause of a ship's being destroyed; now he preaches to prevent a city from a similar end. Whereas on the ship he remained defensive, now he proclaims Yahweh's message. Then comes the climax of Jonah's realization (or perception); as he observes the Ninevites plead for mercy, then beholds Yahweh respond with compassion and grace, he becomes part of a full and rich expression of divine love and divine life.

What could gratify a believer any more than that? Not Jonah, though; he grows angry at Yahweh's grace. Moreover, he asks to die (4:3), as Elijah had requested for himself (1 Kgs 19:4). These two details, in addition to other images of death in chapter 4 (and throughout the book), present Jonah less as a satirized prophet and more a tragic figure. Some humor may arise from the narrative, but the laughter turns to mourning as the intended Hebrew audience considers the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:3). How utterly disgraceful for the melancholic evangelist to seek death for himself and destruction for the Ninevites, rather than further Yahweh's plan to make of Abraham a great nation and through his progeny to evangelize the Gentiles. That blessing, in Jonah anyway, has turned into a curse, though never apart from divine superintendence.

God's sovereignty is further elevated, and dramatically so, in the narrative following Jonah's death wish. Once again he leaves his assigned place of ministry, goes somewhere east of Nineveh, and pouts. (Again one recalls the dramatic irony in Elijah's self-willed flight from Jezebel, as if she controlled all, and God's providential care of Elijah during his "retreat.") But even now, the metaphor of death remains; as the fuming prophet shelters himself from the sun, the narrator says, he "waited to see what would happen to the city" (v 5). This remark implies that Jonah still hoped for the destruction of Nineveh, and adds another dimension to his death-in-life. He is alive, but his thoughts are ruled by death, either his own or the Ninevites'—or both.

This metaphor of death guides the remainder of the narrative as well. First comes the death of the vine that brought a welcomed shade to Jonah (v 7). Then the narrator, perhaps intensifying Jonah's earlier death wish, refers to it again; and the reference occurs on two rhetorical levels, through the narrator's commentary and through Jonah's direct statement: "He wanted to die, and said, 'It would be better for me to die than to live'" (v 8). This claim, incidentally, is a literary

convention that enhances Jonah's call as a prophet. Finally, after Yahweh again asks Jonah if he has "a right to be angry about the vine," the prophet once more shows his preoccupation with death: "'I do,' he said. 'I am angry enough to die'" (v 9). Thankfully, Yahweh has the final word, explaining to Jonah the symbolism of the vine and the value of the Ninevites in carrying out His plan (v 10); and He concludes with a rhetorical question, which is a characteristic way of showing divine sovereignty: "Should I not be concerned about that great city?" The very focus of this question is upon death, the would-be destruction of an ancient metropolis, had the people not repented. The question, posed to an impenitent prophet, heightens the death imagery in the story and points to more dramatic irony: the contrite people of Nineveh are more alive than the Hebrew prophet, whose existence is truly a death-in-life. That the book does not refer to his physical death hardly seems significant in the context of his recurrent spiritual insensitivity, especially after the miraculous display of Yahweh's love.

Throughout the book, then, Jonah demonstrates the downward movement typical of tragedy, in which a privileged protagonist falls from a position of honor and respect, here the ministry of a prophet, to one of rebuke and death. The narrator, in fact, makes this movement clear through repetition: His special standing is established by the phrase "son of Amittai," i.e., truth, and by the call to ministry itself (1:1). Without further delay, however, the narrator explains Jonah's fall, particularly through repetition. He "went down" to Joppa (1:3); aboard the ship in a storm, he had "gone below" (v 5). Later he descended "into the deep" (2:3) and "sank down" (2:6). This entire scene is filled with images of death. And the narrative concludes with Jonah's two death wishes (4:3, 8) and the death of the plant (4:7). His shame is complete, and the irony most strong, as the book ends; the "son of truth" who well knows Yahweh's grace must hear a plea from Yahweh to believe it. This low point is probably the most degrading one in the book.

THE TRAGIC VISION OF THE HEBREWS

This brief narrative is quite similar to OT tragedy, which is found in several texts. Genesis 1-3, probably written 1400 B.C., is tragedy, following the model of dilemma-choice-catastrophe-suffering-perception-death that fits Jonah. Adam and Eve face the dilemma of obeying God's command or eating the fruit (3:1-4). They make a deliberate choice (vv 5-6), then face a twofold catastrophe: their shameful self-consciousness of being naked (v 7), an awareness that must have been horrible because their nakedness once involved no self-consciousness at all; and their alienation from Yahweh, implicit in His rhetorical question "Where are you?" (v 10). Next, the couple endures suffering,

not just the punitive pronouncements from God but expulsion from the garden and, ultimately, physical death. Of course, neither Adam nor Eve (nor Jonah) physically dies immediately following the suffering. Adam and Eve come to realize that disobedience brings disaster; thus, as fallen beings, they now must depend upon Yahweh for help—precisely Eve's statement in 4:1–2.

Within the Jonah text are indications that the author has drawn upon the phraseology of the tragedy in Genesis. As J. Holbert argues (in another context), the use of "sleep" refers back to Gen 2:21; the rhetorical question in 1:8 is an "exact analogy of God's question to Adam in the garden" (see Gen 3:11), and the rhetorical question "What is this you have done?" is the "identical phrase" in Gen 3:13.²⁰ Surely, then, the author of Jonah knew this account and used its literary features in his own narrative.

Even if he did not use Genesis, he had two other biblical tragedies to consult. The account of Samson (Judges 13–16) was written probably in the eleventh century. Here a Nazirite strongman must either adhere to his vow or forsake his spiritual privilege for temporal pleasures. He chooses the latter (see esp. 14:8–9 and 16:1, 4–17, esp. 17) and soon thereafter experiences, unknowingly, the greatest catastrophe conceivable, the departure of God's Spirit (v 20). Then Samson endures the degradation of Philistine imprisonment and slavery (v 21), living in physical blindness (as Jonah does inside the belly of the fish). Shortly before his death, Samson utters a death wish (16:30), as does Jonah, and realizes that his strength comes only from God. Yet another tragedy, that of Saul (1 Samuel), was written ca. 900 B.C., at least a full century before Jonah. This narrative, explicated most impressively by W. L. Humphreys and L. Ryken,²¹ joins two other similar narratives, all of which presented the writer of Jonah with a literary form highly useful to the story of an angry, recalcitrant prophet who would rather

²⁰See "Deliverance," 65, 67, 68. The Hebrew for "deep sleep" (Jonah 1:5–6) is discussed also by J. Magonet, who argues that in both Genesis and Jonah, the words refer to a dormancy "beyond rousing which is close to death" (*Form and Meaning: Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah*, 2nd ed. [Sheffield: Almond, 1983], 67). The phrase "deep sleep" in 1:5–6, based upon a root word that, says Magonet, occurs only eleven times in the Bible, is the "first hint of Jonah's 'death wish,' a theme which is more and more explicitly demonstrated as the story progresses, the request to be thrown overboard, the requests for death in Chapter 4" (68). If Magonet's connection between the root in 1:5–6 and Jonah's declaration to die is forced, certainly the prophet's preoccupation with death intensifies as the narrative develops. The more important point, however, is that neither Holbert nor Magonet suggests any relation between this language and the Hebrew tragic vision that I believe appears in Genesis 2–3 and in Jonah.

²¹W. Lee Humphreys, "The Tragedy of King Saul: A Study of the Structure of 1 Samuel 9–31," *JSOT* 6 (1978) 18–27; and *Words of Delight* 151–55.

die than obey God. No further connection between Jonah and the earlier tragedies can be claimed, of course, because we have not dated the composition of the book of Jonah precisely, identified its author conclusively, or documented his knowledge of contemporary literature. Nevertheless, the earlier OT tragedies were written and the author of Jonah used phraseology in at least one of them to shape his story.

This context for analyzing Jonah derives further support from the tragic spirit in OT literature as distinguished from Greek plays that are called tragedies. The Hebrew tragic vision, defined by W. L. Humphreys as the struggle in a hero between forces beyond his control and flaws within his own character, is "larger than the pure forms of Greek tragedy, and it informs a wide range of literature," appearing perhaps for the first time in *The Gilgamesh Epic*.²² Humphreys' discussion draws in part upon the work of L. Michel, who claims that a tragic view of literature has two prerequisites, the "inscrutability of God" and "actual or moral evil." Both are found, he says, in the OT:

In the Old Testament the materials are often . . . those of competition between men: Cain slew Abel, Jacob defrauded Esau, David coveted Uriah's wife: but the important aspect of these actions is that they are not only evil or dangerous, but sinful. What counts is how a man acts in the eyes of the Lord. . . . No sin is a little thing, because of *God's* greatness. And it is here that the Hebrews, unlike their contemporaries, took the step that allows their history to be seen tragically: Having abandoned God they caused their own penalty and woe.²³

This observation is further detailed by R. Sewall, who notes that the Israelites looked upon the elements of tragedy with "striking clarity," an insight not apparent in other nearby cultures:

Of all ancient peoples, the Hebrews were most surely possessed of the tragic sense of life. It pervades their ancient writings to an extent not true of the Greeks. . . . The Hebraic answer to the question of existence was never unambiguous or utopian; the double vision of tragedy—the

²²W. L. Humphreys, *The Tragic Vision and the Hebrew Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985) 1–9, 18. Humphreys is here distinguishing tragedy, which he says describes the story of Saul, from the tragic vision—a literary dynamic that appears in such passages as Genesis 2–3 and Judges 13–16 (see pp. 69–70 and 77). Whether these passages conform to a genre that may be termed Hebrew tragedy, as I am suggesting, or display the Hebrew tragic vision, the important point is that they present a hero regressing through various phases toward degradation and shame—not as a victim of circumstances, as in formal Greek tragedy, but as a free moral agent who rebels against Yahweh.

²³"The Possibility of a Christian Tragedy," in *Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. Laurence Michel and Richard B. Sewall (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963) 220–21. Later in the same article, Michel denies that tragedy and Christianity are compatible, due to the fact of redemption (pp. 223–33).

snake in the garden, the paradox of man born in the image of God and yet recalcitrant, tending to go wrong—permeates the Scriptures. . . . The Old Testament stories are heavy with irony, often of the most sardonic kind. And yet their hard, acrid realism appears against a background of belief that is the substance of the most exalted and affirmative religion, compared to which the religions of their sister civilizations, Egyptian, Babylonian, and even Greek, presented a conception of the universe and man both terrible and mean.²⁴

Moreover, the terror of tragedy lies in what Sewall describes as the chaotic nature of reality, its disjointed, multi-dimensional, irreconcilable events and ideas—in which truth is anything but harmonious. To be sure, Truth is neither chaotic nor ultimately irreconcilable, but its paradoxical dimensions aid our reading of those times when

Moses, Jonah, and many of the Old Testament heroes and prophets argued with Jehovah, questioned his judgment, criticized his harshness or (as with Jonah) his leniency, in actual dialogue. . . . Ideas, or truth, were not regarded apart, as abstractions or final causes. They were ideas-in-action, lived out and tested by men of flesh and blood.²⁵

In such a *weltanschauung*, Jonah's flight to Tarshish—not just in fear but in challenge to Yahweh—and his childish pouting are not as exaggerated as they may appear. Likewise, his reference to Yahweh as the Creator of the sea (1:9), whether a platitude or a sincere statement, emphasizes “the most exalted and affirmative religion.” In fact, Jonah's acknowledgment of God, revealing his Hebrew heritage, is not necessarily satiric at all, whether spoken with heartless orthodoxy or genuine concern.

JONAH VS. THE PROTAGONISTS IN CLASSICAL TRAGEDY

Later, the Greek playwrights Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides would develop a quite different vision and form of tragedy. In their plays noble characters suffer degradation not always through *hamartia* but at the hand of fate, the gods, whose own follies and obsessions wreak havoc in the human realm. Ryken has listed three characteristics that distinguish OT from Classical tragedy,²⁶ characteristics that support a correlation of Jonah with the Hebrew tragic vision. First, the spiritual dimension of the narrative is obvious; in fact, I would suggest, the ultimate “tragedy” is that the Jonah narrative closes without clear indication that the prophet repented of his sin and found fellowship with Yahweh. Indeed, as chapter 4 ends, Jonah's anger is nothing less

²⁴Richard Sewall, *The Vision of Tragedy* (New Haven: Yale, 1959) 9–10.

²⁵Sewall, 13–14.

²⁶*Literature of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974) 105–6.

than a "Great Evil" that has left him "in need of much greater repentance" than he had shown earlier.²⁷ Surely this is the ultimate disgrace in any believer's life. It is certainly apparent in Samson (see Judg 16:28, 30) and Saul (see 1 Samuel 31). Second, the blame for the catastrophe lies squarely with Jonah and throughout the book God has punished him for his disobedience. Never does he appear as a sympathetic victim of circumstances beyond his control, as happens, for example, with Sophocles' Antigone, whose resolution to her own convictions leads to her death; or with Euripides' Medea, whose uncontrollable anger prompts her to poison her own children as well as Creon.²⁸ Quite the contrary, Jonah's suffering is his own doing. Thus the Hebrew protagonists should not be judged strictly by the Greeks, whose paganistic determinism creates and sustains a sympathetic response from the audience. Third, Jonah has clearly-defined alternatives, preach to Nineveh or reject God's command and suffer chastisement. Though he finally opts for the former, he has also endured the latter, his obstinacy always frustrating the intimate relationship sought by a loving God. That stubborn pride is what Yahweh hates most—and what makes Jonah a tragic figure.

CONCLUSION

Abundant irony, highly-crafted structure, artful narrative, clever word play, captivating use of dialogue—these make the book of Jonah both memorable and literary. The poignant story of a privileged believer who sacrifices his ministry and his intimacy with God for self-gratification is the spirit of OT tragic narratives in Genesis, Judges, and Samuel. That these passages are historical does not make Jonah the same; but if the narrative about Jonah is a part of their literary identity, as I have argued, why should not the text be read as history, as a powerful (though temporary) frustration of the Abrahamic Covenant that only divine grace could overcome? Whether subsequent research extends or refutes this argument, at least the inquiry will have at its disposal a new basis for commentary and a new perspective on the greatest fish story ever told.

²⁷Duane Christensen, "The Song of Jonah: A Metrical Analysis," *JBL* 104 (1985) 231.

²⁸Both plays, in translation, are available in the *Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*, 4th ed. (ed. Maynard Mack et al.; New York: Norton, 1979). The passage from Sophocles (p. 405) is lines 1152ff.; that from Euripides (p. 442) is lines 1100ff.

A LITERARY LOOK AT NAHUM, HABAKKUK, AND ZEPHANIAH

RICHARD PATTERSON

Although the stool of proper biblical exegesis must rest evenly upon the four legs of grammar, history, theology, and literary analysis, too often the literary leg receives such short fashioning that the resulting hermeneutical product is left unbalanced. While in no way minimizing the crucial importance of all four areas of exegesis, this paper concentrates on the benefits of applying sound literary methods to the study of three often neglected seventh century B.C. prophetic books. Thorough literary analysis demonstrates that, contrary to some critical opinions, all three books display a carefully designed structure that argues strongly for the unity and authorial integrity of all the material involved. Likewise, the application of literary techniques can prove to be an aid in clarifying difficult exegetical cruxes.

* * *

THE time has passed when evangelicals need to be convinced that the application of sound literary methods is a basic ingredient for proper biblical exegesis. A steady stream of papers, articles, and books attests to a growing consensus among evangelicals as to the essential importance of literary studies in gaining full insight into God's revelation.¹ This paper presents some observations drawn from the study of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah in preparation for a forthcoming volume in Moody's Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary series (WEC).

¹Among recent books giving attention to literary analysis may be cited: Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982); Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981) and *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985); Leland Ryken, *Words of Delight* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987) and *Words of Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987); Tremper Longman III, *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation* (Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation 3; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987); and Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (eds.), *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987).

A LITERARY LOOK AT NAHUM AND HABAKKUK

Because I have written elsewhere concerning the outstanding literary craftsmanship of the book of Nahum, it remains here only to summarize briefly the results of those studies. I have suggested that Nahum delivers his prophecies of the doom of Nineveh in a bifid structure (1, 2–3) in which he demonstrates that God, the great Judge of the universe, will both see to Nineveh's punishment and the restoration of his own people. In the first section, following a grand hymn praising God both for his chastisement of the wicked and care of the godly, Nahum applies the principles inherent in the hymn to the current situation of Nineveh and Judah. In the second, he carries his argument forward by painting a twofold picture of Nineveh's certain doom (2, 3), each portion being closed by graphically presenting taunt songs celebrating Nineveh's demise.

It was also noted that Nahum took full advantage of the compilational and compositional techniques known to the Semitic world and practiced by the OT writers such as: bookending/enveloping to enclose sections ("scattering" 2:1 and 3:18–19), sub-sections (בְּלִיעַל, "wicked[ness]"—1:11, 15), and individual cola (יהוה, "Yahweh/The Lord"—1:3), and hooking/stitching, to link together the distinctive units at various levels. In addition, Nahum uses the technique of refrain to mark not only major sections and sub-sections, but even to initiate or conclude small units, for example: "not (again)/no (one)" (1:15; 2:9, 13; 3:3, 7[?], 19), הִנֵּה, "behold/lo" (1:15; 2:13; 3:5, 13), and the motif of "fire" that "consumes" (1:6, 10; 2:3, 13; 3:13, 15). Those earlier studies called attention to the richness of Nahum's use of literary figures, a fact that caused Bewer to remark, "Nahum was a great poet. His word pictures are superb, his rhetorical skill is beyond praise . . ."²

Turning to the book of Habakkuk, it may be noted at the outset that while this seventh century B.C. writer was caught up in the problems of his age, he was more concerned with the basic principles by which God regulated his world. This prophet was particularly perplexed as to how a holy God could tolerate a Judean society that was riddled with materialism and injustice.

The book itself rehearses Habakkuk's spiritual odyssey. It records his deep spiritual concerns over the godlessness of his people, a condition which he boldly brings to God's attention (1:2–4). The account moves on to give God's reply to Habakkuk: he is already at work raising up the vicious and voracious Chaldeans to chastise his people (1:5–11). This startling answer catches Habakkuk by such surprise (cf. 1:5–6) that the prophet has a still deeper perplexity. How could God

²Julius A. Bewer, *The Literature of the Old Testament* (3d ed.; New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 148.

use as Judah's chastiser a nation more wicked than the object of his correction? Further, if God himself was to be their sponsor, could their ruthless advance ever be stopped? Still further, how could a holy God use such a wicked nation in the first place (1:12-2:1)?

Habakkuk's new perplexities are partially answered by God who first calls attention to some general principles in his dealings with the righteous and unrighteous (2:2-4) and then applies them to the case of the wicked Chaldeans (2:5, 6-20). Habakkuk is thus assured that God is on the throne, sovereignly directing the affairs of earth's history to their proper end, and admonished to let God be God (2:20).

The book closes with the inclusion of a great twofold victory psalm that recounts God's deliverance of his people from Egypt, his preservation of them through the time of their wilderness wanderings, and his triumphal leading of them in the conquest of the promised land (3:3-15). The rehearsal of that epic material commemorating the age of the Exodus brings a sense of awe and humility to Habakkuk. Such a great God can be trusted to accomplish his holy and righteous purposes with all nations and peoples. Therefore, though calamity must come, Habakkuk will wait patiently and confidently, abiding in the Lord's strength (3:16-19).

The story of Habakkuk's spiritual quest is, however, not laid out in narrative fashion but carefully structured in accordance with standard literary techniques available to the OT writers. Thus, each of Habakkuk's perplexities (1:2-4; 1:12-2:1) makes use of lament genre with its characteristic elements of invocation (1:2, 12), statement of the problem (1:3-4, 13-17), and implied petition. The second perplexity also contains a closing affirmation of confidence in God (2:1). Likewise, each of God's answers displays careful literary attention not only in giving the solution to the plaintiff's query (1:5-6; 2:4, 5-20) but a detailed description of the Chaldean, the agent of Judah's destruction (1:7-11) and a catalog of the woes attendant upon the chastiser (2:6-20) for his failure to meet God's righteous standards (2:4, 5). Each of the woes is formed in accordance with the traditional elements of invective (2:6, 9, 12, 15, 19a), threat (2:7, 11, 13, 16, 20), and criticism (2:8, 10, 14, 17, 18, 19b).

It may be added that each major unit of chapters one and two is composed so that the two perplexities of the prophet are begun with a question (1:2, 12) and each of the answers starts with an imperative (1:5; 2:2). Moreover, the two chapters are threaded together with stitchwords such as: *מִשְׁפָּט*, *צָדִיק*, *בּוֹגְדִים/בּוֹגֵר*, *אָסַף*, and verbs of seeing. Major units in the first two chapters are formed via inclusio, 1:12-2:1 being bookended with the idea of reproof and 2:4-20 being constructed with enclosing statements that contrast the unrighteous Chaldeans with the righteous who live by faith, mindful of God in his holy temple.

As noted above, the central portion of the third chapter preserves a long two-part victory ode, composed in epic style, that sings of God's great superintending of his people during the era of the Exodus and conquest (3:3-15).³ Encased in the prophet's prayer (3:1-2) and praise (3:16-19), it tells of the might deliverance of Habakkuk's people by the God before whom he was to stand in silent awe (2:20). Habakkuk has utilized the epic psalmic material to illustrate and validate his thesis that God is in control of earth's unfolding history and, as in the past, may be expected to deal justly with his covenant nation which he has instructed to live by its faith(fulness—2:4) and "be silent before him" (2:20), resting its case with Israel's true hero and victor—God himself!

One may also make a satisfactory case for considering the whole third chapter as a tephillah—a prayer. Indeed, one may see here many of the features common to this type of poetry (cf. Pss 17, 86, 90, 102, 142): opening cry/statement of praise, and attestation of reverence/trust (v. 2a), petition or problem (v. 2b), praise and exaltation of God (vv. 3-15), statement of trust and confidence in God (vv. 16-18), and concluding note of praise (v. 19). All of this is developed in such a fashion as to settle fully both the prophet's concerns and to assure his readers that God truly is in control of earth's history, guiding the destinies of nations and all men in accordance with his most holy and wise purposes.

Through all of this it becomes apparent that Habakkuk's literary artistry is not inconsiderable. Not only does the account of his spiritual wrestling with God often approximate Israelite wisdom literature in sentiment and expression,⁴ but his lively interchange with God is characteristic of the utilization of dialogue technique in narrative.⁵ If Habakkuk does not reach the level of Nahum's literary artistry, nevertheless his employment of several literary devices and his skillful adaptation of traditional epic material shows that Habakkuk is not without literary sensitivity.

A LITERARY LOOK AT ZEPHANIAH

Zephaniah is concerned with matters relative to the Day of the Lord as a time of judgment for sinful men and of purification for a redeemed people. Like Nahum, the book of Zephaniah proceeds in a

³For justification of Hab 3:3-15 as epic, see R. D. Patterson, "The Psalm of Habakkuk," *GTJ* 8 (1987): 163-94.

⁴See D. E. Gowan, "Habakkuk and Wisdom," *Perspective* 9 (1968): 157-66.

⁵For dialogue technique in Hebrew narrative, see Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, pp. 63-87. Alter particularly stresses the great importance of direct speech in narrative texts by pointing out that "the biblical writers . . . are often less concerned with actions in

basic bifid format, the first half proclaiming the judgment and its severity (1:2–2:3) and the second disclosing the extent and purposes of that coming judgment (2:4–3:20).

Zephaniah accomplishes his goals by utilizing two basic types of prophetic material: (1) positive prophetic sayings (2:1–3; 3:9–13, 14–20) and (2) threats to various groups: the nations of this world in general (1:2–4; 2:4–15), Judah and Jerusalem in particular (1:4–6, 7–13), and individuals (3:1–7). He also employs exhortations (1:7–13; 3:8) and instructional admonitions (2:1–3; 3:14–20),⁶ and laments (1:10–11) and woes (2:4–7; 3:1–7). As well, he uses distinct pronouncements (1:2–3, 4–6; 2:4–15) and detailed informative discussions (1:14–18; 3:9–13).

Like Nahum and Habakkuk, Zephaniah makes full use of the compositional techniques of bookending and stitchwording. Thus the first major section (1:2–2:3) forms an inclusio by means of the theme of God's dealing with the earth (1:2, 3; 2:2). Both major portions of the book as well as their sub-units are linked via distinctive stitchwords. For example, in the first section the opening pronouncement of judgment (1:2–6) is hooked to the following exhortation and warning (1:7–13) by the skillful employment of the tetragrammaton. This latter stanza is in turn linked to the following teaching stanza (1:14–2:3) with a reference to the Day of the Lord. In the second major section the pronouncements against the nations and Jerusalem (2:4–3:7) are hooked to the exhortation (3:8) by means of the stitchword "nation" and the exhortation, in turn, to the teaching portion (3:9–20) by the linking device "nations/peoples." It may be added that each strophe within the stanzas of each major portion shows similar stitching techniques so that the overall structure may be diagrammed in accordance with the accompanying table.

A great deal of discussion has developed as to Zephaniah's use of the genre of apocalyptic. George Adam Smith observes that at times Zephaniah turns to " . . . a vague terror, in which earthly armies merge in heavenly; battle, siege, storm, and darkness are mingled, and destruction is spread upon the whole earth. The shades of Apocalypse are upon us."⁷ Similar language concerning Zephaniah has been put forward by such evangelicals as Freeman and Ralph Smith.⁸ Certainly the

themselves than with how individual character responds to actions or produced them; and direct speech is made the chief instrument for revealing the varied and at times nuanced relations of the personages to the actions in which they are implicated" (p. 66).

⁶This admonition is almost hymnic in nature.

⁷G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets* (rev. ed.; 2 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, 1929), 2:54.

⁸H. E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody, 1968), pp. 232–33; R. L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1984), pp. 130–32.

TABLE I

Structure of Zephaniah

<i>I</i> <i>Declaration of the Day of the Lord's Judgment (1:2-2:3)</i>			<i>II</i> <i>Details Concerning the Day of the Lord's Judgment (2:4-3:20)</i>	
<i>Subject Matter</i>	<i>Stitching</i>	<i>Stanza</i>	<i>Subject Matter</i>	<i>Stitching</i>
Pronouncements		← A →	Pronouncements	
On Earth (1:2-3)] "cut off"		On the Nations (2:4-15)] "woe"
On Judah/ Jerus. (1:4-6)			On Jerusalem (3:1-7)	
Exhortation (1:7-13)] הוה"	← B →	Exhortation (3:8)] "nations"
Teachings	(near is)		Teachings] nations/peoples
Information (1:14-18)	The Day	← C →	Information (3:9-13)] "scattered/afraid"
Instruction (2:1-3)	of the Lord		Instruction (3:14-20)	

presence of apocalyptic themes and language⁹ is noticeable in Zephaniah's description of the Day of the Lord as being one of darkness and gloominess, accompanied by remarkable earthly and celestial phenomena (1:15) and as being the outpouring of a divine wrath that brings destruction, devastation, and death (1:14-18) through a period of great warfare (1:16-18).¹⁰ Further apocalyptic language may be seen in Zephaniah's stress on the element of divine intervention in a climactic judgment that will effect the restoration and everlasting felicity of God's people (3:8-20).¹¹

⁹For important discussions of apocalyptic, see John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1984); Paul D. Hanson, *Old Testament Apocalyptic* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987) and *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); Leon Morris, *Apocalyptic* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972); and Ronald Youngblood, "A Holistic Typology of Prophecy and Apocalyptic," in *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration* (ed. Avraham Gileadi; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), pp. 213-21.

¹⁰See also R. D. Patterson, "Joel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (ed. Frank Gaebelein; 12 vols.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 7:255-57.

¹¹The essential importance of this feature is emphasized by D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), p. 91.

However, it must be confessed that such themes as divine intervention followed by a golden age of peace and prosperity in connection with the judgment of the Day of the Lord are present elsewhere in the OT prophets (e.g., Isa 24–27; Ezek 38–48; Joel 2:1–32 [Heb. 2:1–3:5]; 3:9–21 [Heb. 4:9–21]; Zech 14:1–21). This makes the isolation of a special apocalyptic genre in distinction from normal eschatological prophecy somewhat difficult and calls into question any proposal of apocalyptic material per se in Zephaniah.¹² Indeed, while many of Zephaniah's themes will permeate the pages of the later apocalyptists, Zephaniah's presentation is considerably removed from the emotional fervor that will mark those writers. Accordingly, it may be safest to conclude that while Zephaniah's language anticipates apocalyptic, it does not contain an apocalypse; it is "emergent apocalyptic."¹³

One further feature of Zephaniah's literary style is worthy of particular notice. Zephaniah's prophecy is everywhere punctuated by repetition and wordplay. These are found in extended lines of compound parallel structure in such frequency that Zephaniah's presentation is somewhat monotonously predictable. However, this observation needs to be balanced with the realization that this feature allows for a straightforwardness and forcefulness that are especially effective in capturing his readers' attention. Accordingly, J. M. P. Smith can rightly remark,

He had an imperative message to deliver and proceeded in the most direct and forceful way to discharge his responsibility. What he lacked in grace and charm, he in some measure atoned for by the vigour and clarity of his speech. He realised the approaching terror so keenly that he was able to present it vividly and convincingly to his hearers. No prophet has made the picture of the day of Yahweh more real.¹⁴

A LITERARY LOOK AT NAHUM, HABAKKUK, AND ZEPHANIAH

Despite the necessary brevity of the paper, enough has been said to demonstrate that all three of these prophets display the techniques of composition and style that brand their books as good literary productions. Each of these authors makes use of such things as book-ending and stitchwording. Each prophetic book has a clearly defined and carefully reasoned literary structure. In the case of Habakkuk, the

¹²See further Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, p. 12; Youngblood, "Prophecy and Apocalyptic," pp. 215–16.

¹³P. C. Craigie (*The Old Testament* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1986], p. 200) speaks of Zephaniah as "one of the pioneers of apocalyptic thought."

¹⁴J. M. P. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Zephaniah and Nahum* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911), p. 176.

prophecies are developed around the prophet's perplexities (1:2-4; 1:12-2:1) together with God's answers (1:5-11; 2:2-20) and the great prayer chapter (ch. 3) whose central epic contains a twofold psalm commemorating God's great victory during the Exodus event (vv. 3-15). A clear bifid structure can be traced in Nahum and Zephaniah, Nahum's two halves being built around the features of theme (1:2; 2:2), development (1:3-10; 2:3-10; 3:1-7), and application (2:11-15; 3:8-19), and Zephaniah's two portions being formed with pronouncements of judgment (1:2-6; 2:4-3:7), exhortations (1:7-13; 3:8), and teachings (1:14-2:3; 3:9-20) culminated by forceful admonitions (2:1-3; 3:14-20).

Careful attention to structural matters provides at least two distinct dividends. (1) The attention to organization in all three books argues strongly for authorial integrity. The observable unity in subject matter, theme and development, vocabulary, and perspective that permeates all three chapters of Habakkuk is best explained as the unified product of its author. Likewise, the discernible bifid structure of Nahum and Zephaniah, section answering to section, again argues for authorial intention.¹⁵

(2) Structural data can provide a valuable aid to exegesis. Thus, in Nahum attention to the opening hymn reveals the presence of an interesting (though incomplete) acrostic poem that invites the reader's more critical insight, while consciousness of a hinge verse (3:4) in the midst of a chiasmic pericope (3:1-7) adds freshness and vigor to the flow of thought in a woe oracle. A similar hinging device in 2:4 presents Nahum's readers with a vivid picture of the prophesied military advance against Nineveh: the staging operations (2:2-3), the initial advance (2:4), the all-out attack (2:5-6), and the battle's aftermath (2:7-10).

Similarly, Habakkuk's use of the root נָכַח in 1:12 and 2:1 as a bookending device argues strongly for the idea that the emphasis of 2:1 is upon the prophet's expectation of divine reproof and correction (so NASB, Armerding) as opposed to the thought that Habakkuk was strongly voicing his complaint (NIV, Keil). So construed Habakkuk is saying that much as the Chaldeans had been sent to reprove/correct the Judeans, he expects and deserves God's correction concerning his doubts and understanding of the full scope of God's plans for the future.

In like fashion, viewing Zeph 3:8 as a hinge verse (established on the basis of the observed stitching with the surrounding verses, טָשַׁחְנָה ["judgment"] vv. 5, 8 and כִּי ["because"] vv. 8, 9) makes the flow of

¹⁵Similarly, D. W. Gooding ("The Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel," *Tyndale Bulletin* 32 [1981]: 68) remarks concerning the bifid structure of Daniel, "... we must take seriously the book's internal proportions, as having been deliberately planned by the author."

thought from that of judgment (3:1–7) to future hope (3:9–13, 14–20—Zephaniah's twin theological themes) to be both smoother and strikingly contrastive.¹⁶ It also reinforces the suggestion that contrary to critics who routinely dismiss prophetic messages of hope as later insertions into otherwise prevalent prophetic pronouncements of judgment, not only do hope and judgment commonly occur together, but judgment is integral to hope. From the prophet's point of view, proper corrective to current conditions by divine judgment produces the response necessary to circumstances of hope. Indeed, judgment may thus be viewed as a veiled hope. Such is the case in 3:8. The correction of Jerusalem becomes a prelude to that universal judgment out of which Israel's subsequent blessings proceed (3:9–20).

One further literary comparison between these three prophets revolves around their use of figurative language. Each of the prophets makes rather good use of the standard literary figures utilized by the OT authors, as illustrated in Table 2. Even a casual glance at this list is sufficient to convince the fair-minded critic that our authors were writers of considerable literary ability. Since I have demonstrated Nahum's powerful use of tropic language elsewhere, it will, perhaps, be enough to add an example from each of the other two prophets.

Turning first to Habakkuk, one may note this prophet's exceptional use of literary tools in his fourth denunciation of the Chaldeans (2:15–17). Utilizing the standard format of a woe oracle, the Chaldean is first likened to a man who in feigned friendship gives his neighbor strong drink only to get him drunk and denude him. Moving from invective to threat, Habakkuk turns the metaphor into allegory, the false friend now himself being forced to partake of his own drink and subsequently suffering the shame and disgrace of exposure. Employing the motif of the cup, Habakkuk points out that the Chaldean will pour out a cup of wrath but in turn will drink it himself. He will now know the shame he has brought on others. He is given a sarcastic command, "Go on! Drink! . . . and expose yourself!" The last imperative is extremely graphic. It means literally show yourself as uncircumcised. Naked and without covenantal grounds for leniency, the Chaldean faced certain doom. One could hardly overestimate the cumulative force of the concatenation of the powerful literary figures here.

Although Zephaniah uses literary figures throughout his prophecy, the prophet is at his best in blending such tropes with his employment

¹⁶Zephaniah's employment of the remnant motif, which he threads throughout the fabric of his presentation (e.g., 2:3, 7, 9, 12), is underscored by Herbert Marks, "The Twelve Prophets," in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, p. 216. For the necessary wedding of the themes of judgment and hope, see W. Dyrness, *Themes in Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1979), pp. 219–37.

TABLE 2

<i>Special Literary Features*</i>	<i>Nahum</i>	<i>Habakkuk</i>	<i>Zephaniah</i>
Acrostic	X		
Allegory	X	X	
Alliteration/ Assonance	X	X	X
Anthropopoeia			X
Chiasmus	X	X	X
Enallage	X		X
Heniadys		X	X
Hyperbole		X	
Irony	X		X
Lament	X		X
Merismus			X
Metonymy		X	X
Metaphor/ Simile	X	X	X
Paronomasia		X	X
Personification		X	X
Picturesque Brevity	X		
Repetition/ Refrain		X	X
Rhetorical Question	X	X	
Satire	X		X
Special Parallelism	X	X	X
Synechdoche	X	X	X
Woe	X	X	X

* Full details can be found in the author's forthcoming commentary on *Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah* (Moody).

of literary allusions. Thus, in 1:2–3 he calls upon hyperbole and wordplay to draw attention to God's coming judgment while drawing upon allusions to both the flood and the creation. In depicting the destruction of the Philistine cities (2:4–7), Zephaniah combines wordplay with the metaphor of a deserted woman, thus dramatically portraying their sure demise. Zephaniah's boldest stroke of all comes in 3:9f. Here Zephaniah alludes to earlier Canaanite literary tradition, that tells of a time when Baal was to be handed over to Yamm both as servant and tribute,

Thy slave is Baal, O Yamm,
 Thy slave is Baal for[eve]r,
 Dagon's Son is thy captive;
 He shall be brought as thy tribute.¹⁷

¹⁷ANET, p. 130. That the literary allusion is to this text is rendered certain by Zephaniah's choice of vocabulary drawn from the Ugaritic epic: עֶבֶד (*ʿebed*) "servant/slave," יָבֵל (*yābal*) "bring," and מִנְחָה (*minḥâ*) "tribute/offering." For the Ugaritic text itself, see UT #137:36–38.

The recognition of the literary setting of Zephaniah's words serves as a clue to their translation and understanding. Thus, even as Baal was to be Yamm's servant and was sent as tribute to him, so converted Gentiles who "call upon the name of the Lord" and "serve him shoulder to shoulder" are "my worshipers" who will "bring my scattered ones" (the Jews) as "my tribute."

That these prophets, then, were skilled authors who composed their prophecies with careful design and utilized polished literary techniques to achieve their purposes is undeniable.¹⁸ This fact alone argues strongly for the unity of the books that bear their names. Regardless of that question, however, it is certain that the key to yet more precise understanding in the exegesis of these three prophets lies along the lines of literary analysis.

¹⁸The matter of the relative degree of literary craftsmanship displayed in each prophecy, left unanswered in this paper, will be addressed in a subsequent study.

EVANGELICALS AND THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

M. JAMES SAWYER

The conservative American evangelical apologetic for the shape of the New Testament canon has been historically the weakest link in its bibliology. Arguments for the shape of the canon have been built upon unexamined theological assumptions and historical inaccuracies. Contemporary evangelical apologists for the New Testament canon have downplayed the reformers' doctrine of the "witness of the Spirit" for assurance of the shape of the New Testament canon, appealing instead to historical evidences for the apostolicity of the New Testament documents and to a theological argument of providence for the closure of the New Testament canon in the fourth century. There are, however, methodological weaknesses with each of these appeals. It is suggested the evangelicals reassert the doctrine of the "witness of the Spirit" as a key feature in their apologetic for the New Testament canon rather than rely exclusively upon historical arguments.

* * *

THE PROBLEM OF CANON DETERMINATION FOR EVANGELICALS

OVER the past two decades American evangelical scholarship has risen ably to the defense of the doctrine of the inerrancy of the Bible as a touchstone upholding the historic position of the Church of Jesus Christ with reference to its authority. While volumes have been penned discussing the nature of biblical inspiration and the consequent authority of the scripture, it seems curious that in all the bibliological discussions one crucial issue is scarcely mentioned: the issue of canon. Apart from R. Laird Harris's *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*,¹ Wilber T. Dayton's article, "Factors Promoting the Formation of the New Testament Canon,"² David Dunbar's chapter, "The Biblical

¹R. Laird Harris, *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969).

²Wilber T. Dayton, "Factors Promoting the Formation of the New Testament Canon," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 10 (1967) 28-35.

Canon," in *Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon*,³ Geisler and Nix's discussion in their *General Introduction to the Bible*,⁴ Merrill Tenney's chapter in his *New Testament Survey*,⁵ and a recent series of articles in *Christianity Today*,⁶ American evangelicals who affirm the inerrancy of Scripture⁷ have had little to say concerning the shape of the canon.⁸ The twenty-seven books which compose the New Testament scriptures together with the Jewish scriptures are assumed to be the complete written revelation of God to man without further comment or debate.

It has been charged that conservative evangelicalism's reticence to discuss the issue of canon is due to the fact that it "finds itself imprisoned within a 19th century biblicism which believes that to question the canon is to undermine the authority of Scripture."⁹ Outside the evangelical fold, the question of canon has been debated for decades with the discussion centering on the nature of canon itself. Emil Brunner has noted:

. . . the question of canon has never, in principle, been definitely answered, but it is continually being reopened. Just as the church of the second, third and fourth centuries had the right to decide and felt

³Donald Carson and John Woodbridge, eds., *Hermeneutics Authority and Canon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986).

⁴Norman Geisler and William Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible* (Chicago: Moody, 1971).

⁵Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961). Tenney's approach to canonicity mirrors closely that of Geisler and Nix, hence it is not treated separately.

⁶The February 5, 1988, issue of *Christianity Today* (32:2) included five brief articles covering different issues and perspectives on the subject of canon; Ronald Youngblood, "The Process: How We Got Our Bible"; Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., "The New Testament: How Do We Know for Sure?"; Klyne Snodgrass, "Providence Is Not Enough"; David G. Dunbar, "Why the Canon Still Rumbles"; Kenneth S. Kantzer, "Confidence in the Face of Confusion."

⁷Throughout this discussion the term "conservative Evangelical" is employed in the restricted sense of one who affirms the inerrancy of Scripture. More latitudinal Evangelicals have recently published significant works on the NT canon. Bruce Metzger's *The Canon of the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987) is the most significant of these by an American, while British evangelical scholar F. F. Bruce has published *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988).

⁸Dayton's article "Factors Promoting the Formation of the New Testament Canon" is the one discussion which raises some of the same issues that concern me, but he focuses his attention in a different direction than this article.

⁹Richard Lyle Morgan, "Let's Be Honest About the Canon," *The Christian Century* 84:717 (May 31, 1967) (italics mine). This confounding of the issues of inspiration and canonicity occurs on both the conservative and liberal side of the theological spectrum. One need only remember that some of those who do not profess evangelical convictions attempt to prove that Luther did not hold to inerrancy since he questioned the canonicity of certain New Testament books.

obliged to decide what was "Apostolic" and what was not, on their own responsibility as believers, so in the same way every Church, at every period in the history of the Church, possesses the same right and the same duty.¹⁰

While the issue could perhaps better be stated that the church in every generation has the responsibility before God to re-examine its foundations, the thrust of Brunner's comment is accurate. The question he raises is the question of the certainty of historical knowledge. The question has profound implications for the faith. How does the twentieth century believer know in fact and with certainty that his canon is the canon given by Jesus Christ?

I would propose that the evangelical approach to canon determination has historically been the weakest link in its bibliology. This weakness has persisted for several reasons. (1) Canon has not been a pressing issue of debate on the larger theological horizon. (2) It has been *assumed* that the canon of the New Testament was closed definitively in the fourth century. (3) Apostolicity has been assumed as the controlling issue because of the early mention of this feature by the Fathers. (4) The New Testament canon has been accepted uncritically because of the theological assumption that through divine providence the early church was led (infallibly) to its canonical decisions.

This discussion will address the question of the New Testament canon by (1) looking critically at the traditional inerrantist apologetic for the canon, (2) tracing briefly the development of the New Testament canon up through the Reformation, and (3) proposing an alternative method by which the believer is assured of the shape of the canon.

EVANGELICAL PROPOSALS ON CANON DETERMINATION

Conservative evangelical understanding of the criteria by which the New Testament books were recognized as canonical follows the basic outline laid down by B. B. Warfield and his fellow Princetonians, Charles and A. A. Hodge, over a century ago. These criteria focused exclusively upon the question of apostolicity. The unstated corollary of apostolicity was the conviction that divine providence had led the church to recognize all and only those books which were apostolic. An examination of Warfield as a principle architect, and of R. Laird Harris and Geisler and Nix as contemporary adherents demonstrate this outlook.

¹⁰Emil Brunner, *Revelation and Reason*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1946) 131.

B. B. Warfield

Warfield echoed the sentiment of the early church in stressing the primacy of apostolicity in canon determination.¹¹ He argued that *apostolicity* was a somewhat wider concept than strictly apostolic authorship, although in the early church these two issues were often confounded.¹² "The principle of canonicity was not apostolic authorship," contended Warfield, "but *imposition by the apostles as 'law'*."¹³ The practical effect of this subtle distinction is to allow for the inclusion of books such as Mark, Luke, James, Jude and Hebrews which were not actually penned by the apostles, but were, according to tradition, written under apostolic sanction. Warfield asserted that the canon of Scripture was complete when the last book of the New Testament was penned by the apostle John.¹⁴ From the divine standpoint the canon of Scripture was complete. However, human acceptance of an individual book of that canon hinged upon "*authenticating proof* of its apostolicity."¹⁵ The key idea here is the concept of *apostolic law*. Scripture was authoritative because it was written by an apostle who imposed his writing upon the church in the same fashion as Torah was imposed upon Israel. As he stated,

We rest our acceptance of the New Testament Scriptures as authoritative thus, not on the fact that they are the product of the revelation-age of the church, for so are many other books which we do not thus accept; but on the fact *that God's authoritative agents in founding the church gave them as authoritative to the church which they founded*. . . . It is clear that prophetic and apostolic origin is the very essence of the authority of the Scriptures.¹⁶

¹¹F. F. Bruce surveys the concept of apostolicity in the early church and documents numerous occasions where this factor is mentioned as being a primary criterion in canon determination. He also mentions other issues related to apostolicity which were mentioned by some patristic writers as offering evidence that a book was indeed canonical (*The Canon of Scripture*, 256–69, esp. 256–58). R. Laird Harris, surveying the same material, insists that the sole criterion was apostolic authorship (*Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*, 219–45, esp. 244–45).

¹²B. B. Warfield, "The Formation of the Canon of the New Testament," *Revelation and Inspiration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1927. Reprinted Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981) 455.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Warfield argued here for a date of ca. A.D. 98 (ibid.), but since Domitian died in A.D. 96 contemporary evangelical scholarship would make this date ca. A.D. 95.

¹⁵Ibid. (italics mine).

¹⁶B. B. Warfield, "Review of A. W. Deickhoff, *Das Gepredigte Wort und die Heilige Schrift and Das Wort Gottes*," *The Presbyterian Review* 10 (1890) 506.

The fact that these manuscripts were hand-copied, coupled with the lack of modern methods of travel, made the slow collection of the manuscripts a foregone conclusion.

The problem for the church today, as Warfield admitted, is that we cannot at this day hear the apostolic voice in its [a New Testament book's] authorization. Beyond the witness one apostolic book was to bear to another—as Paul in 1 Timothy 5:18 authenticates Luke—and what witness an apostolic book may bear to itself, we cannot appeal at this day to immediate apostolic authorization.¹⁷

To answer the question of canonicity, Warfield took as a test case the Second Epistle of Peter, a book whose canonicity had been repeatedly doubted over the centuries, and proceeded to investigate the provenance of the epistle to *prove* its canonicity. He asserted that if one demonstrated that the letter was old enough to have been written by an apostle and that the church had from the beginning held the book to be an authoritative rule of faith, then “the presumption is overwhelming that the church from the apostolic age held it to be divine only because it had received it from the apostles as divine.”¹⁸ Having completed his external proof, Warfield then examined critical objections to Petrine authorship based primarily upon internal evidence to see if indeed the critical were valid. The objections Warfield dealt with were six. (1) Peter’s name was frequently forged in the ancient church. (2) The external support of 2 Peter is insufficient. (3) The epistle plainly has borrowed largely from Jude, which by some was judged unworthy of an apostle, while others held this to be a proof that 2 Peter belongs to the second century, due to the assumed lack of genuineness of Jude. (4) The author exhibits too great a desire to make himself out to be Peter. (5) The author betrays that he wrote in a later time by numerous anachronisms. (6) The style of 2 Peter is too divergent from that of 1 Peter to have been written by the same individual.¹⁹ In typical style, Warfield concluded:

The state of the argument, then, really is this: a mountain mass of presumption in favor of the genuineness and canonicity of 2 Peter, to be raised and overturned only by a very strong lever of rebutting evidence; a pitiable show of rebutting evidence offered as a lever. It is doubtless true that we can move the world if the proper lever and fulcrum be given.

¹⁷B. B. Warfield, “The Canonicity of Second Peter,” in *The Selected Shorter Writings of B. B. Warfield-II*, ed. John Meeter (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1976) 48–49.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 73–74.

But if the lever is a common quarryman's tool and the fulcrum thin air!
The woe to the man who wields it. What can such rebutting evidence as
we have here really injure, except his own cause?²⁰

Having dismissed the critical objections, he concluded that the book was genuine and that to question its canonicity is to lead the Church astray into heresy.²¹

Warfield's argument is closely reasoned. He refuted arguments of his opponents by showing their inadequate basis and contradictory presuppositions. However, even his colleague and friend at Princeton, Francis Landy Patton, in eulogizing Warfield noted that the rationalism of Warfield's system of logic was built upon probability which *precluded the absolute certainty of his conclusions*.²²

R. Laird Harris

Harris's 1957 work, *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*, revised in 1969, was among the first in recent years to address seriously the question of the canon from a conservative evangelical perspective. Harris follows Warfield closely in insisting upon apostolic authorship as the criterion for New Testament canonicity.²³ He goes beyond Warfield by denying that the Reformation principle of the witness of the Spirit is a valid test of canonicity of a book of Scripture.²⁴ Harris painstakingly demonstrates that the crucial question for the early church was, "Was the work written by an apostle?" To answer this question he deduces numerous quotations from the ancient fathers which attest the apostolic authorship of the New Testament books.

To answer the question of the presence of books which make no claim to apostolic authorship, he asserts that such books were written by disciples of the apostles who carefully reproduced their master's teaching. With reference to Mark, Harris notes the ancient tradition connecting the second gospel with the Apostle Peter: "... Papias explicitly states that the second Gospel is accepted because of Peter, not because of Mark."²⁵ Harris concluded:

It appears that Mark and Luke were not mere second-generation disciples who followed their masters in time and wrote what they pleased, but were disciples who followed the teachings of their masters in such a way that they presented their masters' teachings, and their production had

²⁰Ibid., 78.

²¹Ibid., 79.

²²F. L. Patton, "Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield," *The Princeton Theological Review* 19 (1921) 369-91.

²³This corresponds to the requirement of prophetic authorship as the requirement for canonicity of an OT book.

²⁴Harris, *The Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*, 292-93.

²⁵Ibid., 239-40.

their masters' authority. . . . We are reminded of Tertullian's use of the phrase "apostolic men," referring to Mark and Luke. In both cases it should be noted that these are not mere companions of the apostles but are, as it were, assistants, understudies, who reproduced their masters' teachings. . . . Quite clearly Mark and Luke are not authoritative in their own right; rather they are authoritative because of their adherence to their apostolic masters.²⁶

With reference to the book of Hebrews, Harris cites the early traditions which ascribe the work to Paul, noting that the lack of that apostle's characteristic salutation was, according to Pantaenus, due to the fact that Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles, rather than the apostle to the Hebrews. He notes, too, the statement of Clement that the epistle had been composed in Hebrew and then translated into Greek by Luke.²⁷ This early testimony notwithstanding, Harris denies Pauline authorship to the book of Hebrews because the author of the epistle himself claims to be a second generation believer (Heb 2:3-4). But having said this he asserts that, "No apostle other than Paul is seriously mentioned in connection with the writing of Hebrews."²⁸

So committed is Harris to the proposition of apostolic authorship, that having noted the fact that the author himself claims to be a *second generation believer*, not of the apostolic inner circle, he then notes that wherever the epistle was accepted as canonical "it was accepted into the canon only in those places . . . where it was considered to be a genuine work of Paul. Appeal was not made to its antiquity nor to the testimony of the Holy Spirit, nor to any other auxiliary reason. Authorship was what was decisive."²⁹

Harris recognizes the dilemma in which this position places him. If the book is not Pauline in *authorship*, should it be excised from the canon? His previous judgment notwithstanding, he proposes that the book *was* written by Paul employing Barnabas as his amanuensis.³⁰ "This would at once explain the unquestioned acceptance (no other anonymous work was so accepted), variation in style from Paul's, the anonymity where the details of authorship were not known and only the style problem appeared, and the double tradition of authorship in other circles."³¹

While he seriously proposes the Paul-Barnabas authorship of Hebrews, he recognizes that this cannot be proven beyond the shadow of a doubt, and allows that there may have been some other amanuensis. Even so, the basic thrust of the argument remains the same.

²⁶Ibid., 244.

²⁷Ibid., 264.

²⁸Ibid., 266.

²⁹Ibid., 268.

³⁰Ibid., 269.

³¹Ibid., 269-70.

Apostolicity in the strict sense remains the governing criterion for acceptance into the canon.

Geisler and Nix

Norman Geisler and William Nix evidence a widening of the very narrow position adopted by Harris. Taking a different starting point than Warfield and Harris, they assert that canonicity is determined by God. Humans do not determine canon; they merely discover the already existent canon which God has given. The key concept in the discovery of canonicity was the recognition of a book's inspiration by God.³² In addition, canonicity is seen as being inexorably linked to authenticity. While Harris made apostolicity the sole criterion for the church's subjective determination of the already existent objective canon, Geisler and Nix propose five principles which guided the ancient church in its discovery of canon. It should be noted that these five principles involve assumption on their part. There is no documentation from patristic sources that these principles were *consciously* employed.

The first of these principles is that of *authority*. Specifically, this criterion looks at the book itself and asks the question, "Does it have a self-vindicating authority that commands attention as it communicates?"³³ Many books were either rejected or doubted because the voice of God was not heard clearly.

The second test for canonicity was that of the *prophetic* nature of the book. Whereas the former test looked at the book itself, this test looked at authorship. "... A book was judged as to whether or not it was genuinely written by the stated author who was a spokesman in the mainstream of redemptive revelation, either a prophet (whether in Old or New Testament times) or an apostle."³⁴ This criterion evidences a loosening of the principle of apostolicity which Harris asserts, since Geisler and Nix would include New Testament prophets (presumably Mark, Luke, James, Jude, the author of Hebrews). By this test all pseudonymous writings and forgeries are to be rejected.³⁵

The third test for canonicity which Geisler and Nix contend was operational in the early church was that of *authenticity*. By authenticity is meant authenticity of doctrine rather than authorship. This test would compare the teachings of any book vying for entrance into the

³²Geisler and Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, 133.

³³*Ibid.*, 138. This criterion is akin to the Reformed doctrine of the *autopistie* of Scripture.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 139.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 140. Geisler and Nix are careful to point out that pseudonymity adopted as a *literary device* would not exclude a book from the canon. The case in point here would be the book of Ecclesiastes in which many understand the author to have written autobiographically as though he were Solomon. Such a device would in their view be allowable since it involved no moral deception.

canon with the doctrine of the already accepted books. Since truth cannot contradict truth, if the book under consideration was found to be at variance with the rest of the canon it would automatically be rejected as non-canonical.

The fourth test was one of *power*. "Does the book come with the power of God?" Since the Word of God was living and active and it was profitable for edification, if a book was not viewed as achieving this goal it was rejected.³⁶

The fifth and final test was its *reception*: Was it generally accepted by the orthodox church? This they admit "is rather a confirmation, and does serve the obvious purpose of *making final* the decision and availability of the books."³⁷

While Warfield consciously addressed the problem of history and the problems involved in certainty of historical knowledge, Geisler and Nix seem implicitly to appeal to the authority of the early church in determining the shape of the New Testament canon. Their appeal to inspiration as the controlling factor and the five principles which they propose guided the ancient church in reaching its decisions as to what books were in fact inspired seem to have little relation to the present. The decision was made by the ancient church and stands today without question.

Weaknesses of the Evangelical View

Whether the criterion be inspiration, apostolicity or something else, I believe that we must acknowledge the *a posteriori* nature of the methods of canon determination which have been proposed. Ridderbos appropriately has noted:

As their artificiality indicates, these arguments are a *posteriori* in character. To hold that the church was led to accept these writings by such *criteria*, in fact speak here of a *criteria canonicitais* is to go too far. It is rather clear that we have to do with more or less successful attempts to *cover* with arguments what had already been fixed for a long time and for the fixation of which, such reasoning or such criteria had never been employed.³⁸

He also stated that "the church did not begin by making formal decisions as to what was valid as canon, nor did it begin by setting specific criteria of canonicity."³⁹ Brevard Childs concurs in this assessment noting, "It is hard to escape the impression that the later expositions of the criteria of canonicity were, in large part, after-the-fact

³⁶Ibid., 142.

³⁷Ibid., 143.

³⁸Herman Ridderbos, *The Authority of the New Testament Scriptures* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1963) 45-46.

³⁹Ibid., 44.

explanations of the church's experience of faith in Jesus Christ which were evoked by the continued use of certain books."⁴⁰

The real problem of these *a posteriori* explanations is that they inject another level of canon into the discussion. As Ridderbos contended: "Every attempt to find an *a posteriori* element to justify the canon, whether sought in the authority of its doctrine or in the consensus of the church that gradually developed goes beyond the canon itself, and thereby posits a canon above the canon which comes in conflict with the nature of canon itself."⁴¹

The questions of inspiration and apostolicity must be briefly addressed. Geisler and Nix, as noted above, make inspiration a criterion for canonicity. While I do not dispute the truth of this statement, I contend that it is inadequate and does not solve the problem. The concept of writing under inspiration was common (albeit not universal) in the ancient church.⁴² Clement makes this claim for his epistle to the Corinthians.⁴³ Clement does not use the Pauline term θεόπνευστος but does state variously, "... the things we have written through the Holy Spirit (γεγράμμενοι διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος)" (63:2) and "to the words which have been spoken by Him (Jesus Christ) through us" (59:1). Even Eusebius makes the claim for his *Life of Constantine*.⁴⁴ Yet, neither Clement nor Eusebius claim that their writings have the authority of Scripture. My point here is not to argue that Clement or Eusebius were or were not inspired, but that the criterion of inspiration, as it is understood today, for canonicity was not *consciously* employed by the ancient church.⁴⁵ With reference to the claim of apostolicity, we must admit that the apostles wrote more documents than have been preserved for us (e.g., a lost letter of Paul to Corinth) which evidently bore the full weight of their apostolic authority. While we may argue that these documents were not inspired and were, therefore, not preserved, from a strictly logical point of view, we merely beg the question. Thus, while either of these two criteria alone or both together can

⁴⁰Brevard S. Childs, *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 33.

⁴¹Ridderbos, 39.

⁴²For a more detailed discussion of the concept of "inspiration" or writing under the leading or influence of the Holy Spirit in the ancient church see Bruce, *Canon of Scripture*, 266-67.

⁴³1 Clement 63:2; 59:1.

⁴⁴*Life of Constantine* I.11.2. Here Eusebius invokes the inspiring aid of the heavenly Word as he writes. For a fuller discussion of the concept of inspiration in the early church see Sundberg, "The Bible Canon and the Christian Doctrine of Inspiration," *Interpretation* 29 (1975) 365-70.

⁴⁵See Thomas A. Hoffman, "Inspiration, Normativeness, Canonicity, and the Unique Sacred Character of the Bible," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 44 (1982) 457-58.

contribute to our assurance as to the shape of the New Testament canon, they fail to *fully* answer the question at hand.

If we insist upon apostolicity as *the* means by which we are assured that our twenty-seven book New Testament is in fact the canon of Jesus Christ, as did Warfield and Harris, ultimately we are forced to rely upon the "assured results of higher criticism" for the certainty of our Scriptures, since even as Warfield noted, "We cannot this day hear the apostolic voice in its authorization." Ridderbos rightly contends "an historical judgment cannot be the final and the sole ground for the acceptance of the New Testament as canonical by the church. To do so would mean that the church would base its faith on the results of historical investigation."⁴⁶

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

Discussions of canon tend to develop in one of two directions depending upon the definition of canon adopted by the theologian. Warfield and Geisler and Nix adopt a *material* definition and stress the objective existence of a God-given standard, which exists by virtue of its divine inspiration. In this sense canon emphasizes the inherent authority of the writing. The second type of discussion, taking its clue from the original usage of the term "canon," stresses the *formal* development of the canon in the sense of a completed list, an authoritative collection, a closed collection to which nothing can be added.⁴⁷

The question of whether the canon is a "collection of authoritative books" or an "authoritative collection of books" hinges on what definition of canon one adopts. If one argues that the individual writings are canonical because of their divine inspiration, then he would logically see the canon as a collection of authoritative books. If, on the other hand, one views the canon in the sense of a completed list to which nothing can be added, he would tend to see the canon as an authoritative collection. However, I believe that at this point, to be consistent, one would have to admit that the authority of the *collection* is imposed by ecclesiastical authority.

The common evangelical view of the development of the New Testament canon views the canon as having arisen gradually and through usage rather than through conciliar pronouncement *which*

⁴⁶Ridderbos, 36. He also argues that the judgment of the early church is an insufficient ground for accepting a book as canonical: "... it is equally obvious that a posteriori the *historical judgment of the church* as to what is not apostolic can never be the final basis for the acceptance of the New Testament as holy and canonical" (p. 35).

⁴⁷Bruce Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, notes that the term *canon* had both a *material* and a *formal* sense.

vested the books of the New Testament with some kind of authority. Athanasius' festal letter (A.D. 367) is generally viewed as the document which fixed the canon in the east and the decision of the Council of Carthage in the west is viewed as having fixed the Latin canon. Youngblood summarizes this position:

The earliest known recognition of the 27 books of the New Testament as alone canonical, to which nothing is to be added and from which nothing is to be subtracted, is the list preserved by Athanasius (A.D. 367). The synod of Hippo (A.D. 393) and the Third Synod of Carthage (A.D. 397) duly acquiesced, again probably under the influence of the redoubtable Augustine.⁴⁸

He concludes: "The closing of the two canons and their amalgamation into one are historical watersheds that it would be presumptuous to disturb."⁴⁹

Evangelicals insist upon the primacy of the written documents of Scripture over and against all human authority. However, in so doing they tend to overlook the fact that other authority did in fact exist in the ancient church, particularly the authority of Jesus Christ and His apostles. They often fail to appreciate that the church was founded not upon the apostolic documents, but rather upon the apostolic doctrine. The church existed at least a decade before the earliest book of the New Testament was penned, and possibly as long as six decades until the New Testament was completed. But during this period it was not without authority. Its standard, its canon, was ultimately Jesus Christ Himself,⁵⁰ and mediately His apostles. Even in the immediate post-apostolic period we find a great stress on apostolic *tradition* alongside a written New Testament canon.⁵¹

As the apostles died, this living stream of tradition diminished. The written documents became progressively more important to the ongoing life of the church. The question of competing authorities in the sense of written and oral tradition subsided. However, even as late as the mid-second century we find an emphasis on oral tradition which stands *in some way parallel* to the written gospels as authoritative.

⁴⁸Youngblood, 27.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 28.

⁵⁰Andrew F. Walls, "The Canon of the New Testament," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979) 632-33.

⁵¹In the NT itself we find on occasion the preference for a personal visit over a letter. Paul declares his desire to be with the Galatians (Galatians 4). In other places we find this same mentality (e.g., 1 Thess 3). On other occasions a letter was preferable to a personal visit, e.g., 1 Corinthians. See F. F. Bruce, "Some Thoughts on the Development of the New Testament Canon," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 65 (1983) 39.

There was a problem in knowing how to sort out which tradition was genuine and which was spurious. The answer, proposed by Papias, was that a tradition which was traceable to the apostles themselves was regarded as genuine. Eusebius quotes Papias as declaring:

But I shall not hesitate to put down for you along with my interpretation whatsoever things I have at any time learned carefully from the elders and carefully remembered, guaranteeing their truth. For I did not, like the multitude, take pleasure in those that speak much, but in those that teach the truth; not in those that relate strange commandments, but in those who deliver the commandments given by the Lord to faith and springing to truth itself. If then any one came, who had been a follower of the elders,—what Andrew or what Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the disciples of the Lord, and what things Aristion and the Presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord say. For I did not think that what was to be gotten out of books would profit me as much as what came from the living and abiding voice.⁵²

Theo Donner objects to the interpretation of Papias' words which would make him downplay the importance of the written Scripture. He insists that Papias was "relying on oral tradition only for his commentary on the words of the Lord, not for the actual content of the words."⁵³ McGiffert notes that Papias' statement should not be interpreted to mean that Papias' faith was in oral tradition as opposed to written tradition, but that the oral tradition supplemented the written tradition.⁵⁴ In his following discussion of Papias, Eusebius notes that Papias preserved heretofore unwritten tradition of the words of Christ on the authority of Aristion and John the elder.⁵⁵ The point here is that at this period the two, written and oral tradition, existed side by side.

The concept of an authoritative Christian tradition can be traced back into the New Testament itself. Paul speaks of the chain of receiving and delivering a body of teaching.⁵⁶ It is, therefore, not surprising to see in this early period both written works and oral tradition existing side by side in some sort of authoritative fashion.

⁵²Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39.3–4, in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, 2d ser., ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, trans. A. C. McGiffert, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976) 171.

⁵³Theo Donner, "Some Thoughts on the History of the New Testament Canon," *Themelios* 7:3 (April 1981) 25.

⁵⁴Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius*, trans. by Arthur Cushman McGiffert, NPNF, 2nd series (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1951) 1:171n5.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 172.

⁵⁶E.g., 2 Tim 2:2; 1 Cor 11:23.

Without doubt, the earliest Bible for the Church consisted of the Old Testament scriptures, interpreted Christologically. Additionally, in the New Testament itself we find at least one case of some New Testament books being placed on a par with the Old Testament. In 2 Pet 3:16 the apostle makes reference to the ignorant and unstable who twist the letters of Paul "to their own destruction as they do the rest of Scripture." The second occurrence is 1 Tim 5:18 where the author coordinates a quotation from Deut 25:4 ("Do not muzzle the ox while he is treading out the grain") with a citation from Luke 10:7 ("The laborer deserves his wages"), citing both as Scripture. This probably indicates that even at this early date the writings of the apostles were viewed in some circles as being on a par with the Old Testament.⁵⁷ However, F. F. Bruce has contended, "such hints would not necessarily indicate a new corpus of sacred scripture: if Paul's letters are reckoned along with 'the other scriptures' in 2 Pet 3:16, that might in itself imply their addition to the Old Testament writings, perhaps in kind of an appendix, rather than the emergence of a new and distinct canon."⁵⁸

The earliest solid evidence we find of a New Testament canon, in the sense of an authoritative collection of writings, comes not from the hand of the orthodox church with its apostolic tradition, but from the second century heretic, Marcion. It was in part this heretical threat which impelled the church to come to grips with the extent of its authoritative writings. The earliest evidence we possess of a canonical collection of books by the ancient church is the Muratorian Canon, dated in the mid to late second century.

Another factor which affected the formation of the New Testament canon was theological. The Montanist movement, with its claim to a continuing prophetic revelation, relied heavily upon the Apocalypse.⁵⁹ This provoked a reaction of mistrust in prophetic literature in the ancient church particularly with reference to the Apocalypse.⁶⁰ The orthodox church of Syria, from this point forward, rejected the Apocalypse, although it had earlier looked upon the book with favor.⁶¹

⁵⁷In a recent study on p⁴⁶ Young Kyu Kim has argued on calligraphic grounds that the papyrus, which contains ten of the Pauline epistles plus the book of Hebrews should be dated before the late first century reign of Domitian ("Paleographic Dating of p⁴⁶ to the Later First Century," *Biblica* 69 [1988] 254). If correct this would argue even more strongly for the authority of the apostolic writings in the early church.

⁵⁸Bruce, "Some Thoughts on the Development of the New Testament Canon," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 65 (1983) 39.

⁵⁹For a fuller discussion of Montanism's influence in the formation of the canon see Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 99-106.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 104.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 119; cf. W. G. Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 17th rev. ed., trans. H. C. Kee (Nashville: Abingdon, 1973) 502-3.

Evidently, this was a situation where the apostolic tradition was looked to in adjudging the heterodox nature of the Montanist position. In an attempt to discredit this position, parts of the ancient church were not averse to denying books it had previously approved, in order to cut the ground out from under the heterodox.⁶²

The production of Tatian's *Diatessaron* must be considered in the process of the development of the canonization of the New Testament. Tatian, a pupil of Justin Martyr, took the four canonical gospels and from them composed a harmony (c. 170). This work supplanted the canonical gospels in the Syrian church well into the fifth century, at which time the hierarchy made a concerted effort to stamp out the work and restore the four canonical gospels to their rightful place within the canon.⁶³

Yet another factor which affected the collection of the books into a coherent collection was the introduction of the codex as it replaced the scroll. Bruce notes, "The nearly simultaneous popularization of the codex and the publication of the fourfold gospel may have been coincidental; on the other hand, one of the two may have had some influence on the other."⁶⁴

The Festal letter of Athanasius (c. A.D. 367) is well known as the first list to contain all and only the present twenty-seven book New Testament Canon. Thirty years later the Synod of Carthage, under the influence of the great Augustine, reached a similar conclusion. Youngblood gives the common Protestant evaluation of these pronouncements:

Thus led (as we believe) by divine Providence, scholars during the latter half of the fourth century settled for all time the limits of the New Testament canon. The 27 books of Matthew through Revelation constitute that New Testament, which possesses divine authority equal to that of the Old.⁶⁵

The problem with such a sweeping assertion is that it does not fit the historical facts. First, the synods of Hippo and Carthage were not ecumenical councils, but local assemblies whose decisions held sway only in the local sees. The Festal letter of Athanasius, to be sure, gives us the judgment of a key figure of the ancient church, but it did not

⁶²See Metzger, 105.

⁶³J. A. Lamb, "The Place of the Bible in the Liturgy," in *the Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) 567.

⁶⁴Bruce, "Some Thoughts," 49.

⁶⁵Youngblood, "The Process, How We Got Our Bible," *Christianity Today*, 32:2 (February 5, 1988) 27.

bind even the Eastern Church.⁶⁶ The ancient church *never* reached the conscious and binding decision as to the extent of canon. Proof of this fact can be seen in the canons of the various churches of the ancient world.

While the canon in the west proved to be relatively stable from the late fourth century, the canon in the oriental churches varied, sometimes widely. The Syriac church at the beginning of the fifth century employed only the *Diatessaron* (in place of the four gospels), Acts, and the Pauline epistles.⁶⁷ During the fourth or fifth century the *Peshitta* was produced and became the standard Syriac version. In it the *Diatessaron* was replaced by the four gospels, 3 Corinthians was removed and three Catholic epistles, James, 1 Peter and 1 John were included. The Apocalypse and the other Catholic epistles were excluded, making a twenty-two book canon. The remaining books did not make their way into the Syriac canon until the late sixth century with the appearance of the Harclean Syriac Version.⁶⁸ While the Syrian church recognized an abbreviated canon, the Ethiopic Church recognized the twenty-seven books of the New Testament plus *The Shepherd of Hermas*, *1 & 2 Clement* and eight books of the *Apostolic Constitutions*.⁶⁹

Even in the west the canon was not closed as tightly as commonly believed. A case in point is the apocryphal Epistle to the Laodiceans. In the tenth century, Alfric, later Archbishop of Canterbury, lists the work as among the canonical Pauline epistles. Westcott observed that the history of this epistle "forms one of the most interesting episodes in the literary history of the Bible."⁷⁰ He noted that from the sixth century onward Laodiceans occurs frequently in Latin manuscripts, including many of which were prepared for church use. So common was the epistle in the Medieval period, it passed into several vernacular translations, including the Bohemian Bible as late as 1488. It also occurred in the Albigenian Version of Lyons, and, while not translated by Wycliffe personally, it was added to several manuscripts of his translation of the New Testament.⁷¹

⁶⁶Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*, 215, notes that while there was a basic unity of content in the East, their canons still reflected a diversity for centuries after Athanasius.

⁶⁷The Catholic epistles and the Apocalypse were omitted. Hebrews, viewed as Pauline, was accepted, while Philemon was either unknown or rejected. The fourth century Syrian fathers included 3 Corinthians as canonical (W. G. Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 502).

⁶⁸*Ibid.*

⁶⁹*Ibid.* The Ethiopic version is dated as early as the fourth century by some. Others would attribute it to the seventh century (Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 2d ed. [New York: Oxford University Press, 1968] 84).

⁷⁰B. F. Westcott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament*, 3d ed. (London: Macmillan, 1870) 426.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 429. Cf. Metzger, *Canon of the New Testament*, 238-40.

On the eve of the Reformation, Luther was not alone in having problems with the extent of the New Testament canon. Doubts were being expressed by loyal sons of the Church. Luther's opponent at Augsburg, Cardinal Cajetan, following Jerome, expressed doubts concerning the canonicity of Hebrews, James, 2 and 3 John, and Jude. Of the latter three he stated, "They are of less authority than those which are certainly Holy Scripture."⁷² Erasmus likewise expressed doubts concerning Revelation as well as the apostolicity of James, Hebrews and 2 Peter. It was only as the Protestant Reformation progressed, and as Luther's willingness to excise books from the canon threatened Rome that, at Trent, the Roman Catholic Church hardened its consensus stand on the extent of the New Testament canon into a conciliar pronouncement.⁷³

The point of this survey has been to demonstrate that the New Testament canon was not closed in the fourth century. Debates continued concerning the fringe books of the canon until the Reformation. During the Reformation, both the Reformed and Catholic Churches independently asserted the twenty-seven book New Testament canon. Youngblood asserts that the canon was closed by providence and we have no right to question that closure. The problem with his assertion is that it is an extra-biblical pronouncement to which, apparently, the theological equivalent of canonical authority is being given.⁷⁴ While it is proper to argue that divine providence *did* superintend the collection of the New Testament canon, we cannot equate providence with the belief of the majority. If this were true, we should all be Roman Catholics today! As Klyne Snodgrass has asserted, "Providence is not enough."⁷⁵ The problem of an appeal to *providence* for support of an argument is that there is no objective criterion by which one is to judge what is and is not providential. One's place in history can radically affect his interpretation of an event or process. A chilling example of this phenomenon is seen in the "German Christians'" response to the rise of Adolf Hitler. The "German Christians" spoke of the "Lord of History" who was at that moment in Germany's history speaking in a clear voice. It led a group of theologians at Wurtemberg to declare in 1934:

We are full of thanks to God that He as Lord of history, has given us Adolf Hitler, our leader and savior from our difficult lot. We acknowledge that we, with body and soul, are bound and dedicated to the

⁷²Ibid., 443.

⁷³It is significant that the early Lutheran Confessions did not contain a list of the canonical writings.

⁷⁴See Ridderbos, 39.

⁷⁵Klyne Snodgrass, "Providence is Not Enough," *Christianity Today*, 32:2 (February 5, 1988) 33.

German state and to its Fuhrer. This bondage and duty contains for us, as evangelical Christians, its deepest and most holy significance in its obedience to the command of God.⁷⁶

Rather than focus solely upon the external criteria of apostolicity, inspiration or providence for our assurance that our present twenty-seven book New Testament canon is indeed the canon of Jesus Christ, there is a better way for us to approach the problem. This way is not new but is a return to and recognition of the Reformers' doctrine of the *witness of the Spirit* and the *self-authenticating nature of Scripture for us today*.

THE AUTOPISTIE OF SCRIPTURE AND THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

Discomfort with the traditional conservative evangelical apologetic for the canon is not new. A century ago this became a central focus of Charles Briggs' attack on the Princetonian bibliography.⁷⁷ More recently, Ridderbos has argued that the common apologetic for canon ultimately leads a person to one of two alternatives, a certainty based upon what amounts to be "assured results of higher criticism," or the infallibility of the church.⁷⁸ For the evangelical Protestant neither of these alternatives is ultimately satisfying.

Ridderbos and Briggs both build their rationale for canon recognition upon the Reformers, arguing that the *autopistie* of the writings themselves objectively, and the witness of the Spirit subjectively, form the proper matrix through which we should view the shape of the canon.⁷⁹ Shifting the means of our *certainty* of the form of the canon

⁷⁶Cited in G. C. Berkouwer, *The Providence of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 162-63.

⁷⁷See this writer's Th.D. dissertation, "Charles Augustus Briggs and Tensions in Late Nineteenth Century American Theology" (Dallas Theology Seminary, 1987) 214-27. While Briggs' name is infamous as a convicted heretic and he did indeed deny the inerrancy of Scripture, his doctrine of canon was never challenged as being heterodox, even by his greatest theological foe, B. B. Warfield.

⁷⁸David G. Dunbar has objected that Ridderbos too easily lumps Protestant appeals to divine providence in guiding the church's recognition of the canon together with Roman Catholic claims of ecclesiastical infallibility. "To be sure, there is a formal similarity, but materially there is a great difference in the theological program here at work. . . ." ("The Biblical Canon," *Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon*, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986] 355). I would agree that there is a difference between an appeal to an infallible Pope or hierarchy and to consensus. However, the question still remains if indeed the "leading of the Lord" does not ultimately vest some kind of infallible authority in the consensus of the church.

⁷⁹F. F. Bruce asserts apostolicity as a valid objective criterion for determining canonicity, but goes on to assert the "self authenticating authority" of the NT books (*The Canon of Scripture*, 276-77). This criterion is akin if not identical to Briggs' *autopistie* of the Scripture.

from the objective external criterion of apostolicity alone in no way should imply down-playing the importance of this factor as a *ground* of canon. Rather, as Warfield and Ridderbos both have noted, no book of the New Testament *as we possess it* contains a certificate of authentication as to its apostolic origin. That is, from our perspective, separated by nearly two millennia from the autographa, we cannot rely upon such means as the known signature of the apostle Paul to assure a book's authenticity. Hence, we cannot use apostolicity as the means by which we are *ultimately* assured of the shape of the canon. The same can be said for the criterion of prophetic authorship, unless we merely beg the question and assert that the book itself is evidence that its author was a prophet.

The starting point of canonicity must be a recognition that *at the most basic level it is the risen Lord Himself who is ultimately the canon of His church.*⁸⁰ As Ridderbos has observed:

The very ground or basis for the recognition of the canon is therefore, in principle, redemptive-historical, i.e., Christological. For Christ himself is not only the canon in which God comes to the world, but Christ establishes the canon and gives it its concrete historical form.⁸¹

It is also the risen Christ who causes His church to accept the canon and to recognize it by means of the witness of the Holy Spirit.⁸² However, this does not relieve the believer individually or the church corporately of the responsibility of examining the history of the canon, nor does it give us the right to identify *absolutely* the canon which comes from Jesus Christ (i.e., the material canon) with the canon of the church (i.e., the formal canon). As Ridderbos has said, "the absoluteness of the canon cannot be separated from the relativity of history."⁸³ In short, the church confesses that its Lord has given an *objective* standard of authority; for our purposes today that consists of the written documents. But we must also recognize that, due to sinfulness, insensitivity or misunderstanding, it is possible for us *subjectively* to

⁸⁰It might be objected here that the earliest church did have a written canon, that of the Old Testament. While this is true, it was the OT *interpreted Christologically* by the Lord Himself and His Apostles. Thus, the risen Jesus Christ was the standard, the canon, by which even the OT was measured. Metzger has cogently argued the OT was not the ultimate authority in the infant church, rather it was Jesus Christ. The apostles did not preach the OT but rather bore witness to the Person and Work of Jesus Christ who had come to bring the OT to fulfillment (Mark 5:17). See Bruce M. Metzger, *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content* (New York: Abingdon, 1965) 274.

⁸¹Ridderbos, 40.

⁸²Ibid., 41.

⁸³Ibid.

fail to recognize properly the objective canon Christ has given. We may include a book which does not belong, or exclude a book which does belong.

How then are we to determine what properly belongs to the canon? Is it "every man for himself"? Charles Briggs has proposed a viable method for us to consider today, a method which balances and supplements the objective historical evidence with *immediate* divine testimony. Following the Reformers he proposed a *threefold program for canon determination* built upon the "rock of the Reformation principle of the Sacred Scriptures."⁸⁴ The *first* principle in canon determination was *the testimony of the church*. By examining tradition and the early written documents, he contended that *probable* evidence could be presented to men that the scriptures "recognized as of divine authority and canonical by such general consent are indeed what they are claimed to be."⁸⁵

With reference to the Protestant canon this evidence was, he believed, unanimous. This evidence was not determinative, however. It was only "probable." It was the evidence of general consent, although given under the providential leading of the Spirit. It was from this general consent that conciliar pronouncements were made. It did not, however, settle the issue, since divine authority could not be derived from ecclesiastical pronouncement or consensus. The *second and next higher level* of evidence was that of *the character of the scriptures themselves*. This is the Reformers' doctrine of the *autopistie* of the scriptures. Their character was pure and holy, having a beauty, harmony and majesty. The scriptures also breathed piety and devotion to God; they revealed redemption and satisfied the spiritual longing within the soul of man. All these features served to convince that the scriptures were indeed the very Word of God. As Briggs stated, "If men are not won by the holy character of the biblical books, it must be because for some reason their eyes have been withheld from seeing it."⁸⁶ It is in light of this concept that we should understand the Syriac church's rejection of the Apocalypse and Luther's rejection of the book of James. In both cases there was a pressing theological reason which kept them from seeing the divine fingerprints upon specific books of the New Testament. In a very real sense it was their zeal for the truth of the apostolic faith/gospel which blinded them.⁸⁷

⁸⁴Charles A. Briggs, *General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899) 163.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 165.

⁸⁷See Geoffrey Wainwright, "The New Testament as Canon," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 28 (1975) 554. Cf. also R. Grant, "Literary Criticism and the New Testament Canon," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 16 (1982) 39.

The *third and highest principle* of canon determination was that of *the witness of the Spirit*.⁸⁸ The *witness of the Spirit* was to be distinguished from the providential leading of the Spirit in history in that the latter was external to the individual whereas the former involved the individual directly. Briggs stated, "The Spirit of God bears witness by and with the particular writing . . . in the heart of the believer, removing every doubt and assuring the soul of its possession of the truth of God."⁸⁹

Briggs saw the witness of the Spirit as threefold. As noted earlier, the Spirit bore witness to the particular writing. Secondly, the Spirit bore witness "by and with the several writings in such a manner as to assure the believer"⁹⁰ that they were each a part of the one divine revelation. This argument was cumulative. As one recognized one book as divine, it became easier to recognize the same marks in another of the same character. A systematic study of the scriptures yielded a conviction of the fact that the canon was an organic whole. The Holy Spirit illumined the mind and heart to perceive this organic whole and thus gave certainty to the essential place of each writing in the Word of God.⁹¹ This factor became very important for Calvin in his discussion of the canonicity of 2 Peter. He saw in the epistle nothing that was in conflict with the other Scriptures which he did accept. This became significant in his acceptance of the epistle as canonical despite reservations concerning its style. "For Calvin properly would have us understand not only that such books were accepted by the church from ancient times but also that they contain nothing which is in conflict with the remainder of Scripture, which was never contested in any way. Is not an important truth to be found, with respects (sic) to the limitations of the canon, in the statement: *Sacra Scriptura sui ipsius interpres*?"⁹²

Third, the Spirit bore witness "to the church as an organized body of believers, through their free consent in their various communities and countries to the unity and variety of the . . . Scriptures as the complete and perfect canon."⁹³ This line of evidence was a reworking of the historical argument but strengthening it with the "vital argument of the divine evidence."⁹⁴ Whereas before, the church testimony was

⁸⁸This third step is the *highest* level since it is built upon the previous two steps. The witness of the Spirit should not be construed as being opposed to the first two steps but operating in conjunction with them.

⁸⁹Briggs, *General Introduction*, 165.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid., 163.

⁹²Ridderbos, 51.

⁹³Briggs, *General Introduction*, 166.

⁹⁴Ibid.

external and formal, whenever we come to recognize the Holy Spirit as the guiding force in the Church in both the formation and recognition of the canon, "then we may know that the testimony of the Church is the testimony of divine Spirit speaking through the Church."⁹⁵

Focusing on the principle of the witness of the Spirit for assurance in canonical questions introduced a subjectivity factor which rendered the question of canon, in the absolute sense, undefinable.⁹⁶ While the Reformers did attempt in their creeds to define the limits of canon, Briggs contended that in so doing they betrayed their own principle of canon determination. If scripture was self-evidencing, then that evidence that God was the author was to the individual.⁹⁷ In addition, doctrinal definition, in order to be binding upon the Church, had to be held by consensus of the whole church. Both the Reformed churches and the Roman Catholic Church represented but a fraction of the church catholic, hence, they could not give definitive pronouncement to canon questions.⁹⁸ He held that the question of canon must then be regarded as open to this day in the subjective (formal) sense. An individual believer was thus free to doubt the canonicity of a particular book without the fear of being charged with heresy.⁹⁹

Summarizing Briggs' method of canon determination: first, the logical order began with the human testimony as probably evidence to the divine origin of Scripture. This testimony brought the individual to esteem the Scriptures highly. Next, when he turned to the pages of Scripture itself, they exerted an influence upon his soul. Finally, the divine testimony convinced him of the extent of the truth of God, at which point he shared in the consensus of the church.¹⁰⁰

Geisler and Nix proposed five tests for canon which were employed in the early church, *authority, prophetic nature, authenticity, power and reception*. These tests have a great affinity with Briggs' threefold

⁹⁵Ibid., 167.

⁹⁶Ibid., 142-44. Even John Warwick Montgomery has noted ("The Theologian's Craft," *CTM* 37 [1966] 82 n. 72, cited in Dunbar, "Biblical Canon, 360), "absolute certainty, both in science and theology, rests only with the data (for the former, natural phenomena; for the latter, scriptural affirmations)." Dunbar admits that "the shape and limits of the canon are not scriptural affirmations. Therefore . . . we cannot claim absolute empirical certainty for our canonical model" (p. 360). This is not to deny that from a practical perspective some theological formulations attain a "certain" status.

⁹⁷Briggs, 142-44. This fact is merely a distillation of the teachings of the Reformers; see Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 1:7:1, 4, 5; and the Gallican Confession, article 4.

⁹⁸Ibid., 146.

⁹⁹Ibid., 64. Ridderbos has stated: "There was never any discussion of the canonicity of the majority of the NT writings. The church never regarded these writings as being anything else except the authoritative witness to the great period of redemption" (*The Authority of the New Testament Scriptures*, 44).

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

program. However, there is one *crucial* difference. For Geisler and Nix the question is strictly historical, how did the *ancient church* reach its conclusions? For Briggs the question concerns *the modern believer*. How are we *today* assured of the shape of the canon? Briggs' proposal, while injecting an uncomfortable subjective element into the process, does, following the Reformers, recognize the active role the Spirit of God plays in the recognition of His Word. If Goodrick is correct in his analysis of θεόπνευστος, that Scripture is alive "with the vitality of God Himself,"¹⁰¹ this, too, lends credence to the active and continuing role of the Spirit with reference to Scripture. Briggs' proposal provides a viable apologetic as to how we can bridge the gap between the relativity of historical knowledge and the certainty of faith.

Admittedly if we follow this path we open the door to a subjective factor with which many evangelicals would be uncomfortable. I must admit my own discomfort with what I am proposing. I would much prefer an absolutely logical, rational position which could not be assailed. Yet from a methodological perspective I feel forced to this position. As Kraus has observed, "*as long as the gap between probability and demonstration remains, there also remains the necessity of a subjective and volitional response to the appeal of truth before there can be certainty.*"¹⁰² A strictly inductive and rational approach to the question of canon leaves us only with probability, a very high degree of probability to be sure, but probability as opposed to certainty. We as evangelicals insist upon the necessity of a "personal relationship with Jesus Christ" which by its very nature must be subjective. Is it so difficult for us to admit that God still speaks to us today concerning the Scripture? Or did He cease testifying to its nature in the fourth century?

CONCLUSION

The question of the canon of the New Testament is clearly not as simple as it appears in survey texts and popular presentations. Among evangelicals, theories of canon determination have tended to stress external criteria for assurance that the Scripture we possess today is in fact the whole extent of the revelation which God has given to the believer. While I do not believe this is totally invalid, I have suggested weaknesses in this approach if by it we want to build absolute assurance.

Earlier I used the phrase "the assured results of higher criticism" to describe our apologetic for our New Testament canon. I use the phrase advisedly, not hyperbolically, for it is indeed literary criticism

¹⁰¹Edward W. Goodrick, "Let's Put Second Timothy 3:16 Back in the Bible," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 25:4 (December 1982) 486.

¹⁰²Kraus, *Principle of Authority*, 270 (italics mine).

upon which we engage when we seek to explore the provenance of a document. I use this phrase also to bring to mind the arrogant reconstructionist claims of the nineteenth century concerning the nature of Scripture. As we have watched archaeologists' shovels undercut these "assured results" we have rejoiced that the historic faith of the church in its scriptures has been vindicated again and again. Yet, American evangelicals have forsaken their Reformation heritage and slipped into the same type of rationalism regarding the canon as that for which we castigate liberals of a bygone era. My point here is that we as evangelical Christians are by definition, people of faith. I believe that when we attempt to build our apologetic for our New Testament canon *solely* upon rational ground, we betray the faith principle.

The individual's ultimate assurance that the scripture he has received is indeed the Word of God must be grounded upon something more (but not less) than historical investigation. Scripture as the Word of God brings with it its own witness, the Holy Spirit, who alone can give certainty and assurance.

1 CORINTHIANS 7:29-31 AND THE TEACHING OF CONTINENCE IN *THE ACTS OF PAUL AND THECLA*

W. EDWARD GLENNY

This study purposes to present the meaning of 1 Cor 7:29-31 in its original literary context and then to contrast that meaning with its application in The Acts of Paul and Thecla.

This contrast is the basis for a critique of Dennis Ronald MacDonald's theory that The Acts of Paul preserve aspects of Pauline teaching which should be considered on a level with the Pastoral Epistles; MacDonald implies that The Acts of Paul are closer to the primitive Pauline teaching on the role of women than the Pastorals are.

The supposed similarity of the teaching on marriage in 1 Cor 7:29-31 and the application of this passage in The Acts of Paul and Thecla is a crucial link in MacDonald's argument that The Acts of Paul reflect primitive Pauline teaching. This study of 1 Cor 7:29-31 proposes, however, that the teaching of the Acts of Paul and Thecla concerning marriage is closer to the doctrine of the opponents of Paul in 1 Corinthians, than it is to the teaching of Paul in 1 Cor 7:29-31.

* * *

INTRODUCTION

EVEN the casual reader of *The Acts of Paul* is struck by the author's emphasis on sexual continence. This is an emphasis seen most clearly in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* where in Iconium, Paul preaches "the word of God concerning continence and the resurrection."¹ Some of the statements concerning purity and continence in the sermon are general and the exact application intended is unclear. However, the sermon is summarized in a series of beatitudes, which tie

¹*Acts of Paul and Thecla* 5. All the quotations from the *Acts of Paul* are taken from Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2 vols., edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher and translated by R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965).

the author's notion of purity to the matter of sexual continence. According to the beatitudes those who are married should refrain from normal conjugal relations and live as if they are unmarried, and those who are unmarried should remain pure and renounce marriage.

The beatitude series shows a clear connection with Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 7² and some similarity to the beatitudes of Matthew 5 and Luke 6. The clearest similarity to I Corinthians 7 occurs in the beatitude "Blessed are those who have wives as if they had them not, for they shall inherit God." The phrase οἱ ἔχοντες γυναῖκας ὡς μὴ ἔχοντες is a verbatim reproduction of I Cor 7:29b. Other similarities between Paul's sermon in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* and I Corinthians 7 reinforce this connection. In a later beatitude Paul declares "Blessed are they who through love of God have departed from the form of this world, for they shall judge angels."³ The Greek word σχῆμα ("form") occurs only twice in the New Testament, in I Cor 7:31 and Phil 2:7, and the occurrence in I Cor 7:31 warrants serious comparison with *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* since both texts employ σχῆμα in the construction, "the form of this world."⁴ Both the Corinthian and Theclan texts stress virginity and continence (or self-control) as key themes.⁵ This evidence supports Schneemelcher's conclusion concerning the language in *The Acts of Paul*. He states that

²The Pauline authorship of I Corinthians is assumed throughout this paper. See Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982) 2:120–26; and Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1970):421–49 for discussion of Pauline authorship of I Corinthians. While the Pauline authorship of portions of I Corinthians has been questioned by some, I Corinthians 7 is seldom questioned. Winsome Munro, *Authority in Paul and Peter*, SNTMS, 45 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983):80–81 questions the Pauline origin of I Cor 7:17, 20, 24. Munro argues that these verses conflict with the command for a slave to take advantage of the opportunity to be free in verse 21. This argument is not compelling because Paul continually qualifies his teaching in I Corinthians 7 and because, as S. Scott Bartchy, *First Century Slavery and I Cor 7:21*, SBL Dissertation Series 11 (Missoula, Montana: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973): 96ff. has shown, "there was no way that a slave could refuse freedom-status if his master decided to manumit him" (98). Munro argues further that elements of verses 17, 20, 24 resemble a stratum of material later than Paul. In light of the consistency of these verses with Paul's teaching throughout I Corinthians 7 and the lack of textual support for a later addition of these verses, this author has not found these arguments compelling.

³*Acts of Paul and Thecla* 6.

⁴The words modifying σχῆμα are not identical in both places (I Cor 7:31—τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου and *APTh*—τοῦ σχήματος τοῦ κοσμοῦ). Also I Corinthians states that "the form of this world is passing away" while *APTh* emphasizes the blessedness of those "who have departed from the form of this world." It is interesting to note that cognates of σχῆμα are also used in I Cor 7:35, 36.

⁵The noun ἐγκράτεια occurs four times in the New Testament (Acts 24:25, Gal 5:23, and two times in 2 Pet 1:6). The verb form is found only in I Cor 7:9 and 9:25.

The author's language is uniform, and to a large extent that of the NT. In particular the Pastorals and Acts have been used, but so also have the Gospels and Paul's letters. Here however it is scarcely a question of exact quotations, but rather of linguistic and conceptual agreement on the basis of a knowledge of the NT literature.⁶

The linguistic and conceptual agreement between I Corinthians 7 (especially vv. 29-31) and the beatitudes in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* (5-7) indicates that the second century author of *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* had knowledge of I Corinthians 7 and intentionally or unintentionally used some of the concepts found in it. The similarity of the general subject and especially of the words and phrases suggests at least a strong possibility that the second century author was directly dependent on I Corinthians.

Whether *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* depend directly on I Corinthians or not, some scholars like Dennis Ronald MacDonald suggest that *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* preserve the teaching of I Cor 7:29-31.⁷ MacDonald believes I Cor 7:29-31 and *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* reflect the "radical characteristics of apocalyptic movements"⁸ and teach "a renunciation of sex and marriage."⁹

This connection between *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* and I Corinthians is important for MacDonald's thesis in his book, *The Legend and the Apostle*. In this work¹⁰ he argues that several oral legends lie behind *The Acts of Paul*. MacDonald maintains that these legends had social value for women, promoting the notions of women teaching in the church and celibacy. He argues that the Pastoral Epistles were written later to object to the teaching of these legends and to silence these women. The Pastorals were accepted as canonical by the church and the legends were not;¹¹ however, MacDonald argues that the church's image of Paul should not be shaped by the Pastorals alone but also by the legends. In fact, the implication of his book is that the legends in *The Acts of Paul* are closer to the primitive Pauline teaching than the Pastorals are.¹²

⁶Hennecke, 2:348.

⁷Dennis Ronald MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983):44-45.

⁸Ibid., 44.

⁹Ibid., 46.

¹⁰MacDonald's theories are also found in his articles. Among them are "The Role of Women in the Production of the Apocryphal Acts of Apostles," *The Iliff Review* 41 (Winter 1984):21-38 and "Virgins, Widows and Paul in Second Century Asia Minor," *SBL Seminar Papers* 16 (1979):169-83.

¹¹MacDonald summarizes *The Legend and the Apostle* on 14-15.

¹²Ibid., 97-103. On p. 98 MacDonald states that "in many respects the legends stand closer to the center of Paul's theology than do the Pastorals."

This paper purposes to present the meaning of I Cor 7:29–31 in its original literary context and then contrast that meaning with its application in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*. Then the implications of this comparison for MacDonald's thesis will be noted.

PAUL'S OPPOSITION AT CORINTH

The opposition that Paul attacks throughout I Corinthians (7:1–40 and 11:2–16 being the exceptions to this combative spirit) is not from outside the church but is rather promoted by key figures from within (15:12; cf. 4:18).¹³ Paul's opponents at Corinth have been sitting in judgment on him (4:3) and had been favoring Apollos (4:6; cf. 3:5). The key issue at Corinth is what it means to be *pneumatikos* (cf. especially chapters 12–14)¹⁴ and this is closely tied with the subjects of *sophia* (chapters 1–4) and *gnosis* (chapters 8–10). Two other more basic theological problems, which surface in the epistle, are connected with the confusion over spirituality inherent in a dualistic worldview and an over-realized eschatology.

Walter Schmithals¹⁵ and others have equated this dualism with Gnosticism, yet since the only element common between the situation at Corinth and Gnosticism is the dualism, it is better to explain the dualistic Corinthian worldview as a result of the assimilation of the gospel to the Hellenistic environment of Corinth.¹⁶ The over-realized Corinthian eschatology is a matter closely related to the dualism issue. Anthony C. Thiselton has demonstrated the existence of this latter emphasis throughout I Corinthians¹⁷ and Fee seems to be correct in calling it "spiritualized eschatology," arguing that "from their point of

¹³Gordon Fee suggests that though the problems were initiated by a few (1:12, 4:3, 6, 18–20; 9:3; 10:29–30; 14:37; 15:12) they had infected nearly the whole assembly by the time I Corinthians was written (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987]:8). The fact that the heavy fire of the epistle is addressed to the whole church supports this latter fact.

¹⁴Fee (10–11) shows the emphasis on this theme throughout the epistle. Anthony C. Thiselton's "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," *New Testament Studies* 24 (1978):510–26 demonstrates that "in every single section from the beginning of the epistle to xiv. 40 there occurs evidence of *both* a realized eschatology *and* an enthusiastic theology of the Spirit on the part of the Corinthians" (523). Bartchy, 128ff., has a helpful development of the problem also.

¹⁵Walther Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1971).

¹⁶F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971):20–21. See the critique of the Gnostic explanation by R. McL. Wilson, "How Gnostic Were the Corinthians?" in *New Testament Studies* 19 (1972/73): 65–74.

¹⁷Anthony C. Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," *New Testament Studies* 24 (1978):510–26.

view it would not so much be the 'time' of the future that has become a present reality for them, as the 'existence' of the future."¹⁸ The Spirit, which they are experiencing in full measure belongs to the Eschaton, thus they think they are living on a spiritual plane above the merely material existence of this present age.¹⁹ The spiritual ones may have considered themselves to be as the angels (11:2-16; 13:1; cf. Luke 18:29-30; 20:34-36), having already realized the resurrection from the dead (15:12), and thus they considered the body eschatologically insignificant (6:13; 15:12) and also without any present significance. This dualism resulted in license and libertinism in the lives of some (5:1-2; 6:12-20) and severe treatment of the body and denial of sexual relations within marriage on the part of others (7:1-6).

Although he contrasts their present existence with their past pre-salvation experience (6:9-11; 8:7; 12:1-3), Paul drives home the idea that they have not yet arrived, by contrasting their present existence with the future (1:5-8; 3:13-15, 17; 4:5; 5:5; 6:13-14; 7:26-31; 11:26, 32; 15:24, 51-56; 16:22; and especially 4:8-13). Paul corrected the "spiritualized eschatology" at Corinth by emphasizing the "not yet" of salvation which is still to come. He corrected the dualism by emphasis on the importance of the body in this age (chapters 5-7) and in the future (6:14 and all of chapter 15). Throughout the epistle he endeavored to teach what is true σοφία (chapters 1-4), true γνῶσις (chapters 8-10) and thus what it means to be πνευματικός (chapters 11-14).

THE LITERARY CONTEXT OF 1 CORINTHIANS 7:29-31

The Apostle Paul wrote I Corinthians from Ephesus (I Cor 16:5-8) during his more than two years of ministry there (described in Acts 19:1-20:1).²⁰ Paul had written a previous letter to the Corinthians warning them not to associate with immoral persons (mentioned in I Cor 5:9), but this previous letter was either misunderstood or disregarded (I Cor 5:10-11). Later a delegation from the church at Corinth, consisting of Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, brought a series of questions to Paul on behalf of the church (I Cor 16:17).²¹ Paul also received an oral report from the household of Chloe (I Cor 1:11),

¹⁸Fee, 12.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Koester, 2:114-16.

²¹Fee (7) suggests, on the basis of the combative nature of I Corinthians, that the responses of the Corinthians took exception with several of Paul's positions or prohibitions in his previous letter. See also John Coolidge Hurd, *The Origin of I Corinthians* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1983, reprint of the original 1965 edition):50-58, on the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians.

communicating disorders in the church at Corinth. Perhaps confirming suspicions raised by the prior visit of the Corinthian delegation, this report served as the final cause for the writing of I Corinthians.²²

The Structure of I Corinthians

There are four main divisions of I Corinthians. After the introduction (1:1–9), Paul addresses the divisions and disorders in the church at Corinth, which were reported to him by the household of Chloe (1:10–4:21). Chapters 5 and 6 are best understood as connected with 1:10–4:21, not only because they are also based on the report of the household of Chloe, but also because they focus on the question of Paul's authority which is a key issue in 1:10–4:21. Fee suggests that the three issues brought up in chapters 5 and 6 were questions raised in the church which tested Paul's authority, a matter which had been reassessed in chapters 1–4.²³

The third main division of I Corinthians (7:1–16:12) systematically answers the questions that the Corinthians raised for Paul in their letter to him (16:17). The answers to each of these questions are introduced by the phrase, *περὶ δέ* (7:1, 25; 8:1 [cf. 8:4]; 12:1; 16:1, 12).²⁴ The epistle concludes with various instructions to the church in 16:13–24.

The Structure and Argument of I Corinthians 7

In this chapter Paul addresses the first item in the letter the Corinthians sent to him.²⁵ Although the *περὶ δέ* construction in 7:25 (“now concerning virgins . . .”) could be taken as a new section, the whole chapter is united by the themes of marriage and sexual morality and by the afterthought concerning “the unmarried and widows” in 7:39, 40 which adds to earlier instruction given this same group in 7:8, 9.²⁶ Therefore, this study will approach the chapter as a single unit consisting of two parts.²⁷ Furthermore, the purpose of the chapter is

²²Fee (7, n. 18) remarks that “this order of events cannot be proved . . . but it seems to make good sense of the data. It also helps to make sense of the apparent discrepancies between what is really going on in the church and the ‘official’ stance presented in their letter (as, e.g. in 11:2).”

²³Fee, 194–95. See also Hurd, 89, n. 1. Compare especially 4:18–21 and 5:4.

²⁴The exception being 11:17–34 and perhaps chapter 15.

²⁵Note the clause *περὶ δὲ ὧν ἐγράψατε* in 7:1.

²⁶Hurd, 169 states that “in subject matter the topic to which Paul responded in I Cor 7:25–38 is associated with that of the preceding section. Both concern sexual morality. The *περὶ δέ* in 7:25, however, implies that in some sense the problem thus introduced is separate from the preceding.”

²⁷Fee, 268. See also Hurd, 154ff., on this whole issue.

not to be a summary of Paul's teaching on marriage;²⁸ it is rather intended to address the errors concerning marriage at Corinth.

I Corinthians 7:1-24. Paul's instruction to the married in verses 1-7 is based upon the statement in verse 1b: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman."²⁹ It is generally understood that "to touch" is a euphemism for sexual intercourse and verses 2-7 indicate the passage is addressed to married couples. This statement (7:1a) is apparently a quotation from the Corinthian letter, or at least it reflects the sentiment of that letter.³⁰ If it is from the Corinthians letter, "it is good" (καλόν) introduces the notion that it is advantageous or utilitarian for a man not to have sexual intercourse with his wife.³¹ Fee argues that καλόν means "advantageous" or "utilitarian" on the basis of 7:8, 26, 35, and because if Paul was agreeing with the Corinthian slogan in 7:1b it is most likely that that is what it means there also.³² In the context of 6:12-20 and 5:1-5, it seems likely that some within the church thought themselves so spiritual that they were above the temptations of the flesh (6:12-20) no longer having to discipline their bodies and physical appetites. Perhaps they even encouraged those who were married to cease sexual relations in order to demonstrate their freedom from the allure of physical longings.

In verse 2, Paul qualifies the slogan of verse 1b. Both the husband and the wife have sexual needs and rights and, continuing on, the apostle points out not only an obligation to meet the sexual needs of one's mate (v. 3), but also a reciprocal right of each married partner to possess the body of his (her) mate (v. 4). Neither is to "deprive" the other sexually except for a short time, by mutual consent, for the purpose of fasting and prayer (v. 5). For verse 6 to be consistent with verses 2-5, it must mean that Paul's teaching on sexual abstinence is a concession not a command.³³ Thus for Paul, marriage is, to a large degree, sexual, as it is frequently portrayed in Old Testament passages such as Gen 2:15, Prov 5:15-20, and Song of Solomon. Paul's wish is

²⁸This is obvious from 7:2.

²⁹It is impossible to give support for every part of my understanding of I Corinthians 7. However, I will try to give support for main ideas which are especially important for the interpretation of verses 29-31.

³⁰Fee, 276; Hurd, 65-88, 163; see also J. Murphy O'Connor, "Corinthian Slogans in I Cor 6:12-20," *CBQ* 40 (1978):391-96.

³¹See Hurd, 159, for the options concerning the meaning of καλόν. See also Fee, 275.

³²Even though Paul is in general agreement with the principal in 7:1b, he disagrees with the Corinthian's reasons for believing it, and therefore, he qualifies the statement in the following verses. Apparently, this is a Pauline teaching which the Corinthians have abused.

³³Fee, 283-84.

that all could be single as he is (v. 7a), but he only recommends celibacy for those with the "gift."

A series of datives in verses 8, 10 and 12 mark the next divisions of this section. In verse 8 Paul teaches that widows and widowers³⁴ would do well to remain unmarried, as he is. However, verse 9 argues that if those named in verse 8 cannot control their sexual desire, they should marry. Paul teaches the married (vv. 10–11) that believers should not divorce, and if they are separated they are not to remarry but remain single or be reconciled to their spouses. In marriages where only one spouse is a believer (vv. 12–16), the believing partner is not to leave his or her spouse, because the believer has a sanctifying effect on the household (vv. 14, 16). If the unbeliever decides to depart (v. 15) the believing spouse is not "bound" but is to seek peace.³⁵ Verses 17–24, central theological verses in the chapter, teach that the believer is to be content to remain in the social setting he or she is in at the time each one is called into the faith.³⁶ What matters is not one's situation in life but rather obedience to God (v. 19). Throughout the passage, this has been the emphasis of Paul's instruction—to widows and widowers (vv. 8–9), married believers (vv. 10–11) and believers who are married to unbelievers (vv. 12–16).

Apparently the widows and widowers at Corinth were being instructed not to marry (vv. 8–9) and married believers were being encouraged to separate (vv. 10–11). Furthermore, believers who were married to unbelievers were apparently being taught that they were defiled by their sexual relations with the unbelieving spouse. Or, perhaps their unsaved spouses were not willing to forego sexual relations as believers were demanding, and as a result the unsaved partners desired to separate or divorce. The fact that Paul rejects divorce with such emphasis in this section suggests that some of the Corinthians had made statements in favor of it.³⁷

³⁴Fee, 287–88.

³⁵Because of the teaching concerning remarriage in verses 11 and 34 it is best to understand "not bound" here to mean not bound to remain in the relationship, and thus, no implications concerning remarriage are given in this verse.

³⁶Fee rightly notes that even though one is not to be concerned about his or her social setting, one's social setting is to be seen as assigned by Christ. Yet "that does *not* mean that one is forever locked into that setting. Rather Paul means that by calling a person within a given situation, that situation itself is taken up in the call and thus sanctified to him or her" (310). One's concern should be to live out the Christian life in whatever social setting he or she is in without concern for one's social setting.

³⁷Hurd, 167. Hurd (168) suggests that the substance of the Corinthians communication to Paul which occasioned I Cor 7:1–24 was as follows: "Concerning problems of sex and marriage: we believe that Christian couples should forego marital intercourse so that they may devote themselves more fully to things spiritual. After all, is it not true that it is well for a man not to touch a woman? For this reason we also think it best that the

1 Corinthians 7:25-40. The second part of chapter 7 addresses the topic of “virgins” (Περὶ δὲ τῶν παρθένων, v. 25). It is reasonable to think that because “virgins” are mentioned in each part of the argument (vv. 28, 34, 36-38) that this is the topic of the entire section.³⁸ The conclusion of the section is the “so then” in verse 38. The “virgins” are best understood as betrothed couples questioning whether to go through with their intended marriages.³⁹ The ascetic stance seen in the slogan in verse 1b is also evident here where the betrothed were apparently being taught it would be sin to go through with their marriages (vv. 28, 36). This situation is complicated by Paul’s previous instruction (vv. 17-24) to remain in the situation of life one is in; this is obviously difficult for the betrothed. Thus Paul’s opponents at Corinth seemingly have him in a corner; while he favors celibacy (v. 7) he opposes asceticism. How can he affirm celibacy without affirming their asceticism?

Paul argues very gently (vv. 25, 28, 32, 36, 37) that celibacy is the better option, though marriage is no sin and is certainly a valid option (vv. 28a, 36b, 38). The opening statement (vv. 25-28) teaches that because of the present crises it is good for a person to remain unmarried⁴⁰ since those who do marry will experience many difficulties.⁴¹

In verses 29-35 Paul digresses from the specific topic of virgins to explain the Christian’s relationship to the world (vv. 29-31) and the need for all Christians, whatever their marital status, to remain free from concern and live in total devotion to the Lord (v. 35b). It should be emphasized here that Paul’s instructions in verses 32-35 are not to restrict the single or engaged in any way concerning their plans to marry (v. 35). If they do not have the gift of celibacy they are to marry (v. 7).⁴² Verses 36-38 return to the topic of verses 25-28⁴³ and give

unmarried and widows among us remain unmarried, an attitude of which you must approve since you yourself remain unmarried.

It sometimes occurs that the harmony of a marriage is threatened by the demands of the spiritual life. On the one hand, some of the brothers are unable to refrain completely from their wives; on the other hand, some of the marriages include one partner who is not a believer. In these cases we recommend separation so that the spiritual life of the more devout partner is not hampered.”

³⁸Fee, 322-24.

³⁹Ibid., 323-28. C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968) and Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, Hermenia Commentary Series (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975) both adopt the same view. Conzelmann says “what is meant by the term παρθένοι is—superfluously enough—hotly disputed; it means virgins . . .” (131).

⁴⁰Fee, 324.

⁴¹Ibid., 333.

⁴²Ibid., 334-55.

⁴³Hurd, 177-78.

further instructions to an engaged couple.⁴⁴ The chapter concludes with a final comment concerning a Christian woman's right to remarry (vv. 39–40).

I CORINTHIANS 7:29–31

The digression in thought and the vocative address in verse 29 suggest that verses 29–35 are an explanatory digression meant for all the Christian community at Corinth.⁴⁵ The issue which determines Paul's development of verses 29–31 is the Christian's relationship to the world.⁴⁶ The believer is not to withdraw from the world or his relationships in it (vv. 17–24), but instead is to live out the lordship of Christ in this world. As Doughty says, "God's salvation deed in Christ does not translate the believer out of the world, but establishes a new relationship between man and his world. In verses 29–31, Paul elaborates the nature of this new relationship."⁴⁷

The overall structure of verses 29–31 is fairly straightforward. Paul develops the Christian's relationship with the world in five constructions and these five constructions "are bracketed by two assertions which are intended to ground the understanding of existence expressed here."⁴⁸ Fee suggests that the basic premise in verse 29a is followed by its purpose or result (the five ὥς μή constructions in vv. 29b–31a); then the section concludes with the reason (γάρ) in verse 31b.⁴⁹

Paul's opening words, "But this I say," certainly point forward to the following phrase,⁵⁰ "The time is short."⁵¹ The time (καιρός), in which Paul's recipients live, has been determined by God's eschato-

⁴⁴Fee, 327.

⁴⁵Fee, 52, n. 22 shows that the vocative ἀδελφοί, often occurs at a shift in an author's argument. He also argues, on the basis of the evidence in I Corinthians (cf. especially I Cor 11:2–16) and in Phil 4:1–3, that women would have been "participants in the worship of the community and would have been included in the 'brothers' being addressed." See also Fee, 31, n. 16.

⁴⁶D. J. Doughty, "The Presence and Future of Salvation in Corinth," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 66 (1975):67.

⁴⁷Ibid., 67.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Fee, 338.

⁵⁰The NIV seems to have the idea of this clause in its translation, "What I mean is this."

⁵¹This construction is best understood as a periphrastic perfect passive according to Fee, 339, n. 14 and Barrett, 176. Fee adds that, "the verb συστέλλω, depending on context, means to constrict, reduce, restrain, or limit in some way. With time it means to 'compress' it. The picture is that of one for whom the future was either nonexistent, as for most Greeks, or off in the vague distance; but the event of Christ has now compressed the time in such a way that the future has been brought forward so as to be clearly visible." Connections with Mark 13:20 are questionable here according to Fee and Conzelmann, 113, n. 22.

logical intervention in Christ (Rom 3:25, 26). The coming of Christ has initiated the "last days" (Heb 1:2; I Pet 1:20; Rom 16:25, 26), and therefore Christians have a different perspective than Old Testament believers. Paul is not emphasizing that the end is imminent as much as he is emphasizing that it is now clear or plain. This truth should radically alter the values and decisions of Christians.⁵²

The meaning of Paul's introduction to the five ὥς μή constructions in verse 29b is debatable. It is generally understood that τὸ λοιπὸν has a temporal significance and should be translated, "from now on" or "henceforth."⁵³ The context strongly supports such an understanding. More difficult is the ἵνα which follows it. It could be imperative⁵⁴ or it could indicate purpose.⁵⁵ The two ideas are close, but purpose is the more standard use of ἵνα with τὸ λοιπὸν.⁵⁶ The καί merely begins the series of ὥς μή exhortations, each of which is introduced by καί; the first use of it (v. 29b) does not need to be translated.⁵⁷ Thus, in verse 29a Paul is affirming that one reason God has compressed (drawn together) the time of salvation is so that for the remaining time believers would have a new perspective concerning their relationship with this present world.⁵⁸ This new perspective is described in the five exhortations in verses 29b-31a.

These five exhortations are illustrations of the new perspective that the Christian is to have concerning the world. That they are not

⁵²Fee (339, n. 15) makes the following helpful comment. "The analogy of the terminally ill comes to mind. For those who have made peace with it, the amount of time left is less in the forefront than is the change of perspective. They see, hear, and value in a new way. My former student Dr. J. Camery-Hoggatt suggested the analogy of the one who tells a joke. He alone knows the punch line, and because he knows it, it shapes the telling of the joke in its entirety. Through the resurrection of Christ, Christians know the divine 'punch line' (which in this case is no joke but a vivid reality!); they see clearly how the story comes out, and they shape their lives and values accordingly."

⁵³See Margaret E. Thrall, *Greek Particles in the New Testament*, New Testament Tools and Studies, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962):25-30, for a discussion of λοιπὸν. Fee (338) and Barrett (176) support the translation given here. Conzelmann (130, n. 3) lists it as a possibility.

⁵⁴So Barrett, 176; Frederick Blass and A. DeBrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, translated by Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961):195-96; C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979):145; and James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 4 vols., vol. 3: *Syntax*, by Nigel Turner, 95.

⁵⁵Fee (338, n. 10) argues that τὸ λοιπὸν may be preceding ἵνα for emphasis (cf. Gal 2:10).

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, ICC, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1914):155.

⁵⁸Fee, 340.

meant to be taken literally but as "dialectal rhetoric"⁵⁹ is clear from the context. First, if they were taken literally they would be absurd. Second, a literal interpretation of the first illustration contradicts verses 2-5, and third, they contrast what Paul says in Rom 12:15 about sorrowing and rejoicing.⁶⁰

It has been argued that Paul's concern in the first statement is to urge celibacy and abstention from sex within marriage.⁶¹ However, to take the exhortation that literally causes contradiction (cf. vv. 1-5) and would unnecessarily limit Paul's teaching in this clause. Paul is teaching that for the present age, whether one is married or not, he is to live "as if not" because the various relationships of this life are passing away. The obvious reason why he does not have a clause starting "and let those who do not have wives be . . ." is because there is no negative counterpart to complete it, not because he is only addressing married couples.

The tension in the $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ μή expressions is not a temporal one between the present and the future. It instead emphasizes the dialectal relationship between a person and this world. The two present tense verbs in each exhortation emphasize this dialectic.⁶² In light of the eschatological nature of the times in which Christians live (v. 31b), in every situation of life they are to live without their relationship to the world being the determining factor, but instead with their relationship to Christ determining their attitudes and decisions. They are to be in the world, but the world is not to dictate their present existence.

Therefore, if they are married they are to maintain their marriage relationship, but at the same time to carefully control the passions or desires that might shape their married relationship (I Thess 4:4ff). Furthermore, the marriage relationship is not what determines or controls their lives; instead their lives are dominated by Christ and a desire to obey Him (7:19b).

For the Christian, rejoicing and mourning take on new meaning (v. 30). The Christian rejoices and mourns in this world concerning things of this world, but not as this world rejoices and mourns. Furthermore, this world does not determine or dictate the Christian's ultimate responses and relationships with other men. The laughter and tears of this world are not the last word.⁶³

Christians buy and sell (v. 30), but they do not buy to possess. That is, the world does not determine their reasons for buying and sell-

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Doughty, 68.

⁶²Ibid., 70.

⁶³Barrett, 178.

ing. Fee notes that "those who buy are to do so 'as if not' in terms of possessing anything. The eschatological person 'has nothing, yet possess all things' (2 Cor 6:10; cf. I Cor 3:22)." ⁶⁴ This is why the Christian can "use the present world" (v. 31a). The world is not good or evil; it simply is. ⁶⁵ But the present form of this world is passing away (v. 31b); thus one is not to be "exploiting" it, ⁶⁶ engrossed in it, or absorbed in it. ⁶⁷

The reason for the Christian's new relationship with the world is given in verse 31b; in what is the most important sentence in the section, Paul argues, "The essence ⁶⁸ of this world is in the process of passing away." ⁶⁹ The fact that this world is passing away is the basis of the five $\omega\varsigma\ \mu\eta$ statements which precede it; furthermore, the meaning of all of these statements is determined by "Paul's understanding of the salvation deed of God in Christ." ⁷⁰ Fee suggests that the progressive present tense verb form in verse 31b

reflects Paul's already/not yet eschatological perspective. The decisive event is the one that has already happened. In Christ's death and resurrection God has already determined the course of things; he has already brought the present world in its present form under judgement. And so decisive is that event that it has "foreshortened the time." The result is that even now what others are absorbed in, the Christian is free from. ⁷¹

The world is the sphere in which the believer is called to live out the lordship of Christ in this age (7:17-24). ⁷² The believer's life is already in the present determined by the lordship of Christ (7:22) and not by the essence ($\sigma\chi\eta\mu\alpha$) of this present world (7:23, 31). ⁷³

Furthermore, as Schrage has observed, the significance of the present tense verb ($\pi\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\gamma\epsilon\iota$) in the concluding eschatological statement

⁶⁴Fee, 341.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Doughty, 71. He has a lengthy discussion of this term in note 47.

⁶⁷Fee, 341.

⁶⁸This is the translation of Conzelmann, 134; Fee (342, n. 23) says it is more than "simply the outward form that is on its way out, but the total scheme of things as they currently exist." TDNT, s.v. " $\sigma\chi\eta\mu\alpha$ " by J. Schneider (1971)7:956, suggests the translation is "distinctive manifestation."

⁶⁹This is generally understood to be a progressive present tense. See Fee, 342, and the translations in Conzelmann, 130, and Barrett, 178.

⁷⁰Doughty, 73, n. 52.

⁷¹Fee, 342.

⁷²I Cor 7:19 teaches that the lordship of Christ is lived out in a life by keeping God's commands in whatever calling that one is in.

⁷³Doughty, 73.

in verse 31b, is that "the future eschatology of apocalypticism has been made present in a radical way."⁷⁴ As Doughty says, "Christians are exhorted to live as if the end of history had already arrived."⁷⁵ Thus Paul is not concerned here with the future of salvation but rather with "the existence of those who, as a consequence of God's salvation deed in Christ, already stand at the end of history."⁷⁶ In this existence the Christian "uses this world" (7:31), yet the world does not determine a man's existence or enslave him.

It must be emphasized, for the sake of comparison with *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, that understanding the five *ὡς μὴ* exhortations in terms of an eschatological "already" does not imply an apocalyptic renunciation of the world. While for apocalypticism it could perhaps be said that "the present is nothing but . . . , the future is nevertheless of great (worth)."⁷⁷ Paul is suggesting no such rejection of relationships in this world. Doughty summarizes the meaning very well in stating

The dialectic of 'having' and 'not having' is not dissolved by the *παράγει*, but intensified! Both sides of the dialectic, both the 'having' and the 'not having,' must be taken with equal seriousness. The meaning of this dialectic for Paul becomes clear in his own summary statement: 'Let those who make use of the world live as though not exploiting the world.' The worldliness of the Christian is not denied. Christians live in the world and continue to make use of the world.⁷⁸

The error of both the libertines and ascetics at Corinth was that they were continuing to allow their lives to be shaped by the *σχῆμα* of this world; the libertines were disdaining this world and the ascetics were renouncing it. Yet both were responding or reacting to the form or essence of this world and allowing it to shape their existence, rather than using the relationships of this world, which have no ethical significance, as a sphere in which they might love one another (12:31–13:13), obey God (7:19), and glorify Him (6:20; 10:31).⁷⁹

I CORINTHIANS 7:29–31 IN *THE ACTS OF PAUL AND THECLA*

The Acts of Paul is a second century rendition of the missionary ministry and the death of the apostle Paul, which is included in the

⁷⁴Ibid., 68, 70.

⁷⁵Ibid., 68, n. 38.

⁷⁶Ibid., 68–69.

⁷⁷Wolfgang Schrage, "Die Stellung zur Welt bei Paulus, Epiktet und in der Apokalyp-tic" *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 61 (1964):145. Schrage argues for an apocalyptic understanding of I Cor 7:29–31. See the rebuttal of Schrage in Doughty, 70–71, and the discussion in Conzelmann, 133, n. 26.

⁷⁸Doughty, 70–71.

⁷⁹Ibid., 74.

New Testament Apocrypha.⁸⁰ This work describes Paul as traveling around the Roman East preaching the message of sexual abstinence and resurrection from the dead.⁸¹ The clearest example of this message is in the series of beatitudes in Paul's sermon at Iconium in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* 5-6. Among these beatitudes are found the following statements.

Blessed are they who have kept the flesh pure, for they shall become a temple of God.

Blessed are the continent, for to them will God speak.

Blessed are they who have renounced this world, for they shall be well pleasing unto God.

Blessed are they who have wives as if they had them not, for they shall inherit God.

Blessed are they who through love of God have departed from the form of this world, for they shall judge angels and at the right hand of the Father they shall be blessed.

Blessed are the bodies of the virgins, for they shall be well pleasing to God, and shall not lose the reward of their purity.

For the word of the Father shall be for them a work of salvation in the day of his Son, and they shall have rest for ever and ever.

The purpose of quoting from this sermon is to emphasize more clearly the differences between I Cor 7:29-31 and *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

First, there are obvious differences between the teaching concerning marriage and sex in I Corinthians 7 and in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*. Whereas for Paul marriage includes a sexual relationship (I Cor 7:2-5), for *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* that is not the case. While I Cor 7:2-5 teaches that partners have an obligation to meet each other's sexual needs, *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* (5-7, 15) teach one cannot attain to the resurrection from the dead unless he refrains from sexual relations.

Furthermore, in I Corinthians 7 celibacy is a gift (χάρισμα, 7:7) and it is no sin to marry (7:28, 36), if one is not able to live the celibate life (cf. also 7:9, 11). In *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, by contrast, all are exhorted to renunciation of sexual relations and a life of virginity or celibacy. In fact, in the latter work it is said that Paul "deprives young men of wives and maidens of husbands, saying: 'Otherwise there

⁸⁰Hennecke (2:351) dates the writing of *The Acts of Paul* before A.D. 200. Because it is apparently dependent on *The Acts of Peter*, he suggests a date between 185 and 195. MacDonald dates *The Acts of Paul* between A.D. 150-190 (14) and Koester (2:325) dates these works before the end of the second century A.D.

⁸¹Other encratite practices are encouraged, but the consistent message is a call to sexual abstinence. See Koester, 2:327.

is no resurrection for you, except ye remain chaste (ἀγνοί) and do not defile the flesh, but keep it pure (ἀγνήν)'.⁸² Paul tells the governor at Iconium that God sent him "since he desires the salvation of all men that I may draw them away from corruption and impurity, all pleasure and death that they may sin no more."⁸³ In I Corinthians Paul never threatens believers at Corinth with the loss of salvation, or of the resurrection, because of sexual expression. In fact, even in cases of sexual immorality, mentioned in I Cor 5:1-5 and 6:12-20, Paul does not necessarily conclude that those sinning are not Christians. In I Corinthians the exhortation to sexual purity is based on God's previous work of salvation in the life of the Christian (6:11, 15, 19) uniting the Christian with Christ (6:15, 19) and securing his salvation; it is not based on a threat of not participating in the resurrection as in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

It is also worth noting that the simplistic message of Paul in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* urges nothing more than continence and living chastely.⁸⁴ As any student of the apocryphal Acts knows, the contents are always simplistic and superficial when compared with I Corinthians.⁸⁵

Other contradictions between I Corinthians 7 and *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* include the emphasis on maintaining peace in the marriage relationship (I Cor 7:14-16), which is considered unimportant in the Thecla story, and the emphasis on living out the Christian life in one's situation in this life, rather than trying to change one's social situation (see I Cor 7:17-24, 27 as contrasts the teaching in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*).⁸⁶

Perhaps the major difference between the use of the "having wives" statement in I Corinthians and *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* is the eschatological perspective of the two contexts. In the Thecla account the "form of this world" is evil and is to be renounced;⁸⁷ those who have wives and behave as if they had them not are given a future promise of inheriting God. The apocalyptic perspective of *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* understands the relationships of the present to be of

⁸² *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* 12.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 5, 9.

⁸⁵ Hennecke, 350 states that the author of *The Acts of Paul* makes the Apostle the herald of a very simple faith, which can be reduced to a few formulae. . . .

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* Hennecke notes that the theology of *The Acts of Paul* shows how far Christianity had departed from the apostle by the close of the second century. Koester, 2:327 says that "the flowers of pious fantasy bloom more richly in these writings" (meaning the Apocryphal Acts) than in Luke's writings in the New Testament. For the historical differences between Paul's life as described in the New Testament and *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul*, see Hennecke, 2:344, 347-48.

⁸⁷ *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* 5, 6.

no value and the future to be a prize of great worth. This perspective renounces this world and withdraws from it, so as not to be soiled by any aspect of it. In I Corinthians 7 Paul teaches an already/not-yet eschatology. The believer has been saved (6:11) and joined with Christ (6:14, 15, 19). Christ is reigning in this world today (15:20–28) and has dominion over death. “In Christ” the future of the Christian has already been determined (15:22), and now as a δοῦλος Χριστοῦ (7:22) the Christian is to live out the lordship of Christ in this world.⁸⁸ The society of this world is not evil, but as said before it merely *is*, and the believer is to use it for God’s glory. In *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* the condition given for married people to inherit God, or be resurrected, is to renounce this world by refraining from sexual relations within marriage (a “spiritual marriage”). By contrast, I Cor 7:29a emphasizes the tension of Paul’s already/not yet eschatology. The way for the married to live out Christ’s lordship in these last days (since Christ’s resurrection and ascension to position of Lord) is to have a complete marriage, including sexual relations (ἔχοντες γυναῖκας, cf. 7:2). Still the believer should not allow his marriage to determine his life; only Christ should do that. Furthermore, the series of five ὡς μή exhortations in I Cor 7:29–31 shows that this principle is not only for marriage, but applies to every relationship and activity of life.

CONCLUSION

If the argument presented in this paper is correct, it supports the general consensus of opinion that the theology of *The Acts of Paul* has taken quite a departure from the historical Paul.⁸⁹ This is certainly not a new discovery; however, it is relevant to the thesis of Dennis MacDonald. MacDonald’s thesis, which was summarized earlier,⁹⁰ is based partly on the fact that *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* preserve aspects of Pauline teaching, which were handed down to the author of this work through oral legends. On the basis of a general understanding of *The Acts of Paul* one could question MacDonald’s theory. It is infinitely more questionable when it is realized that the *main evidence* he gives for the connection between the apostle and *The Acts of Paul* is the use of I Cor 7:29–31.⁹¹ He maintains that fanatic and apocalyptic elements of Christianity, paralleling the radical characteristics of other apocalyptic movements, are seen in Paul and in *The Acts of Paul* in their common use of I Cor 7:29–31. He suggests that the legends behind *The Acts of Paul* “faithfully preserve this aspect of Paul’s

⁸⁸Doughty, 74–85 is helpful on this subject.

⁸⁹See note 86 above.

⁹⁰See Introduction above.

⁹¹MacDonald, 44–46.

teachings."⁹² He argues that Paul's speech to Artemilla, bidding her to abandon her wealth in view of the impending destruction of the world, is consistent with I Cor 7:29-31.⁹³ He also argues that the impending destruction of the world spoken of in I Cor 7:29-31 "dictates a reappraisal of sexuality,"⁹⁴ which he takes to mean "a renunciation of sex and marriage."⁹⁵ He argues that the general withdrawal from society which is portrayed in the life of Thecla is a continuation of Paul's teaching in I Cor 7:29-31.

This study of I Cor 7:29-31 suggests that the use of this passage to sanction withdrawal from, or renunciation of, the societal relationships of this life is ill-founded. Furthermore, if this is MacDonald's main connection between Paul and the attitude toward society found in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, it certainly raises questions concerning the degree to which *The Acts of Paul* should shape our images of Paul and the religious movement he generated, especially with regard to attitudes toward society.

Finally, in light of the lack of a clear connection between the historical Paul and *The Acts of Paul*, it is fair to ask if the contemporary church should consider *The Acts of Paul* to be a continuation of the teaching of the historical Paul concerning the role of women in society and the church, or concerning any other topic.⁹⁶ The basis of the connection MacDonald has tried to make between *The Acts of Paul* and the historical Paul has been shown to be, in reality, a contradiction. In fact, the teaching of *The Acts of Paul* concerning marriage and sex appears to be the doctrine of the opponents of Paul in I Corinthians, rather than the teaching of the historical Paul.

⁹²MacDonald, 45. See also 98.

⁹³*The Acts of Paul* 7. This is supposedly when Paul is at Ephesus.

⁹⁴MacDonald, 45.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 46.

⁹⁶I am not so naive as to think this paper is a fatal blow to MacDonald's thesis. However, if this paper is correct, he has failed to connect with Paul the later ascetic, fanatic, apocalyptic movements, which renounced and withdrew from society. Also, he has misinterpreted the main passage he uses from Paul to support his own thesis! The burden of proof is certainly in the lap of those who would argue that *The Acts of Paul* reflect the historical teachings of Paul. I would be pleased to see a more serious treatment of the Pauline material in the New Testament by those who seek to make this connection.

ADVERBIAL CLAUSES: STATISTICAL STUDIES

JAMES L. BOYER

This third article in a series of studies dealing with subordinate clauses in the Greek NT will be concerned with the adverbial clauses. The over-all classification is functional, based on the kinds of adverbial modification made by the clauses. Only in the case of the conditional clauses is it necessary to carry the classification further. Attention will be given to the conjunctions or conjunctive relative phrases used to introduce the clauses, to the moods used, and to the clause order. A special feature of this series of studies is the attempt to give statistical information at every level, so that the student may begin to appreciate the relative magnitude of each structure.

* * *

INTRODUCTION

JUST as adjectives modify nouns so adverbs modify verbs, limiting and defining the circumstances under which the action of the verb is to be understood. As adjectives answer the questions "who?" "what?" "what kind?" so adverbs answer such questions as "when?" "where?" "why?" "how?" "under what circumstances?" They may be single words (as *vñv*), or phrases (as *διὰ τοῦτο*), or full clauses. The clauses are the subject of our present study.

They will be taken primarily in the order of frequency of occurrence in the NT, except that in a couple of instances similarity or relationship between classes will bring two together out of the numerical order.

CAUSAL CLAUSES

Meaning

As the name adequately indicates, causal clauses modify the main verb of a sentence by stating the cause or reason for that main assertion. Their meaning is reflected in the way they are translated into

English. Using the NASB¹ as point of comparison these clauses are introduced by "for" (473 times), "because" (224), "since" (26) and a variety of at least 16 other ways, each occurring less than six times.

No attempt is made in this study to refine the classification further, no sub-classification will be attempted.

One problem of identification needs to be considered; the distinction between coordinate (main clause) and subordinate clauses. For example, it is not always easy, or even possible, to decide whether γάρ or even ὅτι is introducing a subordinate or a main clause. Actually GRAMCORD has listed 800 occurrences of γάρ as introducing main clauses (CX)² and only 241 with subordinate clauses (SC). The reverse is the case with ὅτι, 1291 are connected with subordinate clauses (SN,SC,SR) and only 10 with main clauses (CG,CX).

Ordinarily one would expect that a causal clause at the beginning of a sentence would be either (1) subordinate to a main clause which comes later, or (2) the explanation of something that is present in the preceding context or to the mind. Unfortunately it cannot always be known where a sentence begins. The lack of punctuation in the original manuscripts and the tendency to hook long sentences together with many subordinate clauses, complicates the problem, particularly in the light of our precisely opposite modern preference.

In a few instances in this study such ambiguous identifications are called to attention, but usually a choice is made and that is followed.

Structure

Conjunctions Used

These may best be shown in table form.

Causal Conjunctions, Conjunctive Phrases	NT Count	Mood Used	Before or After Main Verb		
			> before	< after	?
ὅτι	439	Ind.	16	423	
διότι	21	Ind.		21	
καθότι	4	Ind.		4	
γάρ	243	Ind.	1	241	1
ἐπεὶ	26	Ind.	2	24	
ἐπειδὴ	9	Ind.	4	5	
ἐπειδὴπερ	1	Ind.	1		

¹Unless otherwise indicated all formal translations of the Bible text will be given from the NASB version.

²These letters in parenthesis are coded tags used by GRAMCORD to identify the various functional classifications of conjunctions. The first letter in the code indicates whether the clause is coordinate (C) or subordinate (S). The second letter designates the function: CG for interroGative, CX for eXplanatory, SC for Causal, SN for Nominal, SR for Result. Others will be identified as they occur.

δι' ἧν [αἰτίαν]	7	Ind.	7
ἀνθ' ὧν	5	Ind.	5
ἐφ' ᾧ	2	Ind.	2
οὗ εἵνεκεν	1	Ind.	1
οὗ χάριν	1	Ind.	1

"Οτι and γάρ account for 93% of all the subordinate causal clauses. ἐπεὶ and its compounds are comparatively rare. I have already called attention to the relative phrases which by antecedent or by context become in effect causal conjunctions.³

Mood

In every instance the mood of the verbs within the causal clause is indicative. This is to be expected, since causes and explanations are characteristically simple statements.

Clause Order

The causal clause follows the main verb in 97% of the instances. Even the ἐπεὶ group, which show more tendency to precede the main clause, are still 74% following. Again, it is more logical that causes and explanations should follow that which is being explained.

Γάρ, here as elsewhere, is post-positive; it never stands as the first word in its clause. Usually it is second or third in sequence, in three instances⁴ it stands as the fourth word in its clause.

Other Causal Constructions

Beside these conjunctive and relative clauses there are other ways of expressing what amounts to a causal clause in the Greek NT.

Adverbial Participles

The anarthrous participle very frequently functions as an adverb in the sentence. While it may not technically be called a clause (there is no finite verb in the construction) yet it clearly functions as one; in most instances the best way to translate it is by an English clause. Of these adverbial or circumstantial participles, 303 are causal in sense, including 35 genitive absolutes.⁵

³See my article, "Relative Clauses in the Greek New Testament: A Statistical Study," *GTJ* 9 (1988) 233-56.

⁴Luke 6:23, 26, 2 Cor 1:19.

⁵See my article, "The Classification of Participles: A Statistical Study," *GTJ* 5 (1984) 163-79. At the time that article was prepared I did not have the computer facilities now available for tabulating and collecting information, so the identification of the adverbial functions expressed by the participles was not included. Later this inadequacy

Articular Infinitives with the Preposition Διά

The articular infinitive after prepositions, while no finite verb is involved, is so completely clausal in character that it is impossible to translate into English without converting it into a full clause. Those which as causal in sense are διὰ with the neuter accusative article and an infinitive (32 examples); also, ἐνεκεν τοῦ and ἐκ τοῦ + an infinitive (one each).⁶

CONDITIONAL CLAUSES

An extensive and detailed consideration of the conditional sentences has previously been published by this writer⁷ so this section will be primarily a summary and collection of statistics. For a fuller discussion and support for some statements made here the reader is referred to these articles.

The conditional sentences proper are composed of four classes.

First Class Conditions

Significance, Meaning

Its meaning is very simple: "If this . . . then that . . ." It indicates nothing as to the actual situation, whether the condition is true or false; in fact it is frequently used for both sides of a true / false condition. Its use of the indicative does not in any way indicate that the protasis is true, or even that it is "assumed for the sake of argument." Sometimes it may be true that the English word *since* is a possible translation, but it is never a "proper" translation. *Since* carries an implication that the condition is true; the Greek first class condition does not. If used to translate a statement which is actually true then the translation would not be "wrong" or "untrue," but it would not be a correct translation in that it would be saying something more than the Greek says.

was met by my *Supplementary Manual of Information: Participles*. This is now available by inter-library loan from the Morgan Library, Grace Theological Seminary, 200 Seminary Dr., Winona Lake, IN 46590.

⁶See my article, "The Classification of Infinitives: A Statistical Study," *GTJ* 6 (1985) 29-48. Complete listings are available in the *Supplemental Manual* on Infinitives (see previous footnote).

⁷There are four articles in the series: James L. Boyer, "First Class Conditions: What Do They Mean?" *GTJ* 2 (1981) 74-114; "Second Class Conditions in NT Greek," *GTJ* 3 (1982) 81-88; "Third (and Fourth) Class Conditions," *GTJ* 3 (1982) 163-75; and "Other Conditional Elements in NT Greek," *GTJ* 4 (1983) 173-88. No supplemental manuals are available for these studies.

Structure

First Class conditions use εἰ with an indicative verb in the protasis; the apodosis may be of any type.

Statistics

Conjunctions	*** Protasis		Order	Apodosis ***	
	Count	Mood		Sentence Type	
εἰ	302	ALL		S — Statement	138
				M — Command	76
εἴ γε	5	I	Prot.	RQ — Rhetorical quest.	52
		N	before	MR — Request	11
εἰ μή	1	D	Apod.	PR — Promise	11
		I		AS — In subordinate cl.	5
εἰ μήτι	1	C	>267	O — Oath	5
		A		P — Potential	5
εἴ πως	1	T		TH — Threat	4
		I	Prot.	X — Exclamation	3
εἵπερ	6	V	after	CH — Challenge	2
		E	Apod.	HS — Hortatory subj.	2
εἵτε	1	S		Q — Question	2
			< 43	RC — Rel. Clause equiv.	2
				MN — Emphatic negative	1
ἐάν	2			MP — Prohibition	1
				() — (No apodosis)	1

It will be noted that all except the last are introduced by the conjunction εἰ or a combination of εἰ with another particle. Even ἐάν is, of course, a combination of εἰ + ἄν, an indefinite particle.

The mood in every instance is indicative, even with ἐάν. The two instances where ἐάν has the indicative, Rom 11:14 and Rev 11:5, seem to be first class in sense, even though ἐάν normally is used in third class conditions, sometimes there with the indicative.

The protasis precedes the apodosis in 267 out of 310 examples (86%). There are 13 instances where the apodosis is missing.

A great variety of sentence types form the apodosis of first class conditions.

Second Class Conditions

Significance, Meaning

Probably the least controversial, its significance is clear: The protasis sets forth a condition which is not true or is thought to be not

true, and the apodosis states the potential consequence if it had been true. "If this were the case (which is not), then that would be. . ."

Structure

Second Class conditions use $\epsilon\iota$ with a secondary (past) tense of the indicative verb in the protasis; the apodosis characteristically is some potential construction such as a secondary tense indicative, usually but not always with $\alpha\upsilon$.

The conjunction used is always $\epsilon\iota$, sometimes with the negative $\mu\eta$ added (10 times); once it also has $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$, in $\epsilon\iota \delta\grave{\epsilon} \mu\eta$.

Analysis of Verb Forms: Statistics⁸

Protasis:		Apodosis:	
Tense:	Order	Tense:	
Imperfect	21	Prot. before	Imperfect 21
Aorist	14	> = 42	Aorist 18
Pluperfect	6	Prot. after	Pluperfect 3
[. . .]	7	< = 6	[. . .] 5
Total	48	----	1

The mood of the protasis is always indicative. The apodosis is always some potential construction, almost always a secondary tense of the indicative, usually with $\alpha\upsilon$ (31 times).

Third Class Conditions

Significance, Meaning

This is properly labelled the Future Condition. It always deals with a future potential, uncertain (subjunctive) because it hasn't happened yet.⁹ The subjunctive does not indicate the degree of uncertainty, only the fact of uncertainty by reason of futurity.

⁸Some symbols appearing in this and following charts are codes I have used for abbreviation and convenience:

[. . .] = Verb is not present; left to be supplied
 ---- = There is no apodosis present
 > = Protasis precedes the apodosis
 < = Protasis follows the apodosis

⁹This statement seems to ignore a large number of condition sentences which use $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$ with subjunctive, the so-called "present general conditions". I have already given extensive treatment of these elsewhere in my article on Third Class Conditions, *GTJ* 3 (1982) 172-75. The "general" or "whenever" idea always introduces potentiality or futurity, and to the Greek mind was expressed naturally by this construction.

Structure

Third Class conditions use $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$ with a subjunctive verb in the protasis, the apodosis may be of any type, usually future in its time-reference.

Conjunctions Used

Almost always it is some form or combination of $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$; the simple $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$ (213 times), $\acute{\alpha}\nu$ (a contracted form, 3) $\kappa\acute{\alpha}\nu$ (by crasis for $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$, 14), $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu\pi\epsilon\rho$ 3; it has the negative added ($\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\mu\grave{\eta}$ 52); total $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$, 286 times. $\epsilon\iota$ is used 5 times; simple $\epsilon\iota$ once, $\epsilon\iota$ $\pi\omega\varsigma$ once, $\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon$ (twice, in correlative clauses), and $\epsilon\kappa\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\epsilon\iota$ $\mu\grave{\eta}$ once.

Analysis of Verb Forms: Statistics

Verb in the Protasis:

Tense:

Present	105
Future	2
Aorist	177
Perfect	2
[. . .]	4
Present (1?3)	1*
Perfect (1?3)	1*

Mood:

Indicative	2
Subjunctive	284
[. . .]	4
Indicative	1*
Indicative	1*

Verb in the Apodosis:

Tense:

Present	129
Future	97
Aorist	42
Perfect	7
[. . .]	12
----	3
Present (1?3)	1*
Perfect (1?3)	1*

Mood:

Indicative	218
Subjunctive	21
Optative	1
Imperative	33
Infinitive	2
[. . .]	12
----	3
Indicative	1*
Indicative	1*

[Explanation: * = Double or doubtful entry; also counted elsewhere

Order of Clauses:

> = Protasis precedes Apodosis	241
< = Protasis follows Apodosis	48
- = No apodosis	3

Sentence type of Apodosis:

> AS	8	Within a subordinate clause
> M	42	Command
> MN	11	Emphatic Negation
> MP	2	Prohibition
> MR	1	Request
> P	3	Potential
> PR	22	Promise
> RQ	32	Rhetorical question
> S	158	Statement
> TH	11	Threat

Fourth Class Conditions

Fourth Class conditions use $\epsilon\iota$ with an optative verb in the protasis and supposedly (from the ancient pattern) $\alpha\upsilon$ with an optative verb in the apodosis. But there are no complete examples in the NT, only a few (9) protases. It has the same significance as the Third Class, only stated a bit less dramatically.

Conjunctions Used

The conjunction is always $\epsilon\iota$, once with the indefinite particle $\pi\acute{o}\varsigma$ added.

Verb Forms in the Protasis

The protasis in all 9 instances is regular, with an optative verb, six are present tense, 3 are aorist.

Verb Forms in the Apodosis

In every instance the apodosis is either incomplete, irregular, or missing. In four the apodosis is an infinitive in the predicate of the main clause (Acts 17:27, 20:16, 27:12, 39). In two the protasis is in effect a single word, a parenthetic expression adverbially attached to the verb of the main sentence (1 Cor 14:10, 15:37: $\epsilon\iota$ $\tau\acute{o}\chi\omicron\iota$, "if it should turn out so"; translated in NSAB by "perhaps"). In only three instances is there an actual apodosis present. Two of these leave the verb unexpressed so it is not possible to tell mood and tense (1 Pet 3:14, 17). Conceivably an optative ($\epsilon\acute{\iota}\eta\tau\epsilon$ v 14, $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\eta$ v 17) might be supplied in conformity with the normal fourth class pattern, but the sense is not right for that. Probably it is better to supply the indicative, as this makes good sense. The third does have a complete apodosis (Acts 24:19). The verb is imperfect indicative, not the optative expected in

fourth class conditions, but possibly it may be taken as a potential indicative equivalent to an optative. The absence of ἄν is not a problem.

Clause Order

In the seven examples where an apodosis can be identified it stands after the protasis twice, before it five times.

EXCEPTIVE CLAUSES

Exceptive clauses are a form of conditional clause. They use the conditional conjunctions, particularly the combination εἰ μή, and involve a special kind of conditional situation. They are treated separately here because they represent a sizable group in themselves and have several distinctive features.

The name reflects the fact that these clauses usually are translated into English by the word "except." They point to a general situation which is not true (the apodosis) except for (εἰ μή = "if not") some specific case (the protasis). Usually the exception is a part of the general, but the parallelism is not always precise.

The conjunction used is εἰ μή, so in form they are first or second class conditions. Εἰ μή is not always exceptive; in 10 instances it is simply a negative second class condition. There are two of the first class passages which are extremely elliptical and the construction is unsure.¹⁰

Is ἔάν μή ever exceptive? There are 43 third class conditions which use ἔάν μή. Only one of these shows the structural pattern of exceptive clauses.¹¹ All the rest are simply negative third class conditions.

Structural Classification

In Greek, these clauses may be grouped into four classes on the basis of their structure.

Adverbial

I have used this term to describe the first group because the conditional phrase used becomes in effect an adverbial introduction to the "apodosis" or main clause of the sentence. Example: Matt 6:1 εἰ δὲ μή γε, μισθὸν οὐκ ἔχετε παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ ὑμῶν τῷ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς "otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven." There is an extreme ellipsis involved. Starting with εἰ μή *if not*, the

¹⁰1 Cor 7:17, 2 Cor 13:5.

¹¹Mark 4:22.

sense expanded may be "if the situation is not the one stated in the context, then this is the result," or simply, "otherwise." I have listed 14 examples in this class.¹²

The conditional phrases involved in this construction are εἰ δὲ μή γε, (8 times), εἰ δὲ μή (3), and εἰ μήτι (1). There is never a verb in the protasis; in fact, there is no protasis at all except this phrase. The rest of the sentence is the apodosis.

"No One . . . Except"

The second group, 31 examples, shows a regular pattern. The conditional conjunction is εἰ μή. The apodosis always stands before the protasis. It uses the word οὐδεὶς or μηδεὶς and makes a statement about "no one" or "nothing." Then in the following protasis it states the exception to that blanket statement. Example: Phil 4:15 οὐδεμία μοι ἐκκλησία ἐκοινώνησιν εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήψεως εἰ μὴ ὑμεῖς μόνοι. "no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone." The protasis is εἰ μὴ ὑμεῖς μόνοι; the verb is always omitted, left to be supplied mentally: "if you [did] not."

"Not . . . Except"

The third group, 33 examples, shows almost the same pattern, except that the negative in the apodosis is a simple negation of the verb rather than a negative pronoun. The negative particle οὐ in one of its forms is usually used, once it is οὐδέ. Μή is used 4 times, once in οὐ μή. Again the protasis uses εἰ μὴ, it always follows the apodosis and there is no verb stated in the protasis. Example: John 19:15 Οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα. "We have no king but Caesar," or more precisely, "We do not have a king if [we do] not [have] Caesar."

"Who . . . Except?"

The fourth group, 10 examples, follows the same pattern except that the apodosis is stated as a rhetorical question: "Who fits this situation except . . . ?" Example: Luke 5:21 Τίς δύναται ἁμαρτίας ἀφεῖναι εἰ μὴ ὁ μόνος ὁ θεός; "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" Note again that εἰ μὴ is the conjunction, the protasis follows the apodosis, the verb is omitted in the protasis, and the negative is implied by the rhetorical question.

¹²This and all other listings referred to in this paper are available through a *Supplemental Manual of Information: Adverbial Clauses*, by inter-library loan from Morgan Library, Grace Theological Seminary, 200 Seminary Dr., Winona Lake, IN 46590.

CONCESSIVE CLAUSES

A Class of Conditional Sentences

There are two groups of concessive clauses. Some (31) are a special group of conditional clauses. They are to be distinguished from other conditional sentences by their use of the conjunction καί in combination with the conditional conjunctions εἰ and ἕάν, and by their distinctive meaning.

Usually translated "though," "although," "even if," these clauses state a conclusion which is affirmed in spite of the condition stated: "even if this is the case, the result follows". Sometimes the condition is considered as an extreme, unlikely case; an objection in spite of which the conclusion is affirmed. Sometimes the condition is treated as a matter of little consequence (like our English "So what?").¹³ These clauses may be First Class (20 examples), Third Class (10), even one Fourth Class.

Structurally the only signal that a clause is concessive is the use of καί in association with the εἰ or ἕάν. But it is not a clear signal. Καί occurs frequently in conditional clauses when it is not concessive (104 out of 746, 14%). Here is a summary of my conclusions after tabulating the information.

(1) Εἰ καί is clearly concessive (18 times). There are a very few exceptions (4),¹⁴ but they each involve another particle along with the καί (εἰ δέ καί 3 times, εἰ γε καί once).

(2) Καὶ εἰ is rarely concessive (3 times¹⁵ out of 22); it is usually simply "and if."

(3) Καί with ἕάν, whether it stands before or after, does not signal concession. Out of 45 examples only three¹⁶ are concessive. With καὶ ἕάν (= καὶ ἕάν) 5¹⁷ of the 14 occurrences are concessive.

(4) Sometimes the sense is concessive when the form does not signal it.¹⁸

¹³These two concepts are not mutually exclusive. It is the judgment of this writer that A. T. Robertson's strong distinction between the two, particularly his association of it with the position of καί before and after the conjunction, breaks down when the actual examples are studied. See his *A Historical Grammar of New Testament Greek in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 1026.

¹⁴For full lists, see footnote 12 above. The exceptions are Εἰ δέ καί Luke 11:18, 1 Cor 4:7, Gal 3:4; εἰ γε καί 2 Cor 5:3.

¹⁵1 Cor 8:5, Heb 11:5, 1 Pet 3:1.

¹⁶With ἕάν καί: 1 Cor 7:11, 28; with καὶ ἕάν: Gal 1:8.

¹⁷Matt 26:35, Mark 16:18, John 8:14, 10:38, 11:25.

¹⁸A very interesting situation occurs in the parallel accounts of Peter's dual remonstrance to Jesus' announcement of his denial (Matt 26:33, 35 and Mark 14:29, 31. All four statements are clearly concessive in sense. In both accounts the first statement uses

Conjunctive Concessive Clauses

The second group of concessive clauses¹⁹ are introduced by concessive subordinate conjunctions, καίπερ (5), καίτοι (2), and καίτοιγε (1); translated in NASB by "although," "though," "and yet." They are not conditional, and are included in this place because they are equivalent in sense to those which use the conditional conjunctions. As a possible link between the two, note that they both to some extent involve the use of καί; in these the καί is compounded with other particles.

The verb in these clauses is indicative (3 times), a participle (4), and once it is elliptical. Half of them are found in the book of Hebrews.

COMPARATIVE CLAUSES

Meaning

Comparative clauses are quite common in the Greek NT, 331 examples. They augment the statement by comparing it to something which presumably is understood. Often they come in pairs, as in English "as . . . so . . ." the comparative clause is introduced by a comparative conjunction, the one to which it is compared may open with a correlative adverb.

These clauses either *describe* or *emphasize*²⁰ the thought expressed in the principal clause. Following this lead I have attempted to assign each comparative clause to one of these categories. The result was: descriptive, 253 or 76%, emphatic, 78 or 24%. But there were many where the choice was arbitrary.

I have attempted another approach to classification which I believe is more helpful in understanding the possible significances of these clauses. It is based on an attempt to discern what was the *point* or *reason* for the particular comparison chosen; the primary element of that comparison which the writer wanted to call to attention. For example, in Matt 6:2, "When therefore you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogue and in the streets, that they may be honored by men," it does not appear that Jesus was warning against the *manner*, or the *place*, in which they blew their trumpets, but in the fact that they did so at all.

εἰ and the second ἔάν. But in Matthew's account καί is added to the first statement and not to the second. In Mark's account the reverse is true, καί is used with the second and not with the first. In both instances the presence or absence of καί makes no difference in the concessive nature of the statement.

¹⁹There are eight; John 4:2, Acts 14:17, Phil 3:4, Heb 4:3, 5:8, 7:5, 12:7, 2 Pet 1:12.

²⁰H. Dana and J. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: MacMillan, 1948) 275.

In studying the comparative clauses from this point of view, I have chosen five categories into which these "main point concepts" seem to fit. The first is the one just illustrated; the action or fact or situation itself. The comparison points to a similar or parallel situation "in accord with which" the other is to be seen; a frequent example is the comparative clause which says, "... as the Scripture says ..." This is by far the type found most frequently, 199 out of 331, or 60%.

The others are more specific in their thrust and more easily described. The second is a comparison in the *manner* of doing something (75 examples); the third, a comparison in *quality or character* (37); the fourth, a comparison in *degree* (17); and fifth, a "parable-type" comparison, amounting in effect to a short parable (only 3 such).²¹

Structure

Conjunctions Used

The most frequently occurring subordinating comparative conjunction is καθώς (175 times, plus one compounded with the particle περ, καθώσπερ. It is translated by the NASB as "just as" (91), "as" (64), "even as" (14) and by a few other phrases.

The word ὥς appears in the NT much more frequently than καθώς, but often in relations other than the one we are presently considering. As a comparative conjunction it occurs 108 times, plus 29 times compounded with the particle περ, ὥσπερ. To translate it the NASB uses "as" (93), "just as" (16), "even as" (6), "like" or "just like" (10) and several other phrases.

Καθά occurs in this construction 11 times, plus once as καθάπερ. It is from καθ' ἃ, the neuter plural accusative of the relative pronoun ὃς ("according to which things," or "after the pattern of these things").

Καθό is found 4 times. It is from καθ' ὃ, the neuter singular accusative of the relative, with meaning similar to καθά. Once it is used along with the indefinite particle ἕάν.

Καθότι (from καθ' ὃ τι, neuter of the indefinite relative) occurs twice as a comparative conjunction, both times with the indefinite particle ἕν.

Correlative adverbs used

In 66 instances (20%) the comparative clause is countered in the main clause by the use of a correlative adverb (cf. English "as . . . so . . ."). They occur in many combinations and in either sequence. The list of correlatives, with counts and clause order noted, is as follows:

²¹Matt 25:14, Mark 4:26, 13:34.

	Before the Comparative	After
οὕτως	16	31
καὶ οὕτως	1	1
καί	1	12
οὕτω	1	1
ὁμοίως	1	1

It should be noted that καί occurs many more times than appears in this list, and is used not only with the correlative but also with the comparative. However, it usually is simply the adverbial καί. Only when it appears to be a part of a pair has it been tabulated as correlative.

Mood of the Verb in Comparative Clauses

The mood is almost always indicative. There are four exceptions. Three are subjunctives; in each the sense is indefinite, the indefinite particle ἕάν is present in one. The other (Heb 7:9) is an infinitive, and the whole expression is an old classical idiom, “ὥς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, *to put it in a word or if one may say so*, used to soften a statement.”²²

Clause Order

The comparative clause usually follows the main clause (241, or 73% of the time). It precedes the main clause (76, or 23%). The other 14 are instances where there is no main clause expressed.

Other Comparative Constructions

Our present study is limited to clauses, so such structures as the use of comparative particles with single words and phrases are excluded. But it is not always easy to decide whether a particular expression is a clause or not. If a verb is present, that decides it as a clause; but if there is no verb it may be questionable. For example, Acts 8:32, Ὡς πρόβατον ἐπὶ σφαγὴν ἤχθη, καὶ ὥς ἄμνος ἐναντίον τοῦ κείραντος αὐτὸν ἄφωτος, οὕτως οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ. “He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He does not open His mouth.” The first ὥς stands with the noun πρόβατον, there is no need to supply a verb, and the ὥς is probably a comparative particle; there is no comparative clause. But the second ὥς, while there is no actual verb present, clearly introduces a statement and needs a verb to be supplied; it is a comparative clause. Another example may

²²W. W. Goodwin, *Greek Grammar*, rev. C. B. Gulick (Boston: Ginn, 1930) 323.

not be so easy to decide. Matt 6:5 οὐκ ἔσεσθε ὥς οἱ ὑποκριταί. "You are not to be as the hypocrites;" Is ὥς a particle? or is it a conjunction introducing a clause, "as the hypocrites (are)"? Perhaps the question is as insignificant in Greek as it is in English.

A group of relative clauses functioning adverbially and expressing degree or measure need also to be listed here, since they involve a comparative sense. They are introduced by the relative ὅσος (sometimes correlative with τοσοῦτος), they all use a verb in the indicative mood. There are 10 examples.²³

FINAL CLAUSES (PURPOSE AND RESULT)

Meaning

Final clauses, sometimes called telic (Gr. τέλος, end), point to the "end" of the sentence action, the direction toward which the action is directed. They involve the two closely related concepts of purpose and result. Purpose is intended result; result is accomplished purpose. Unfortunately for NT exegetes neither NT Greek nor modern English is careful to distinguish between them. In the vast majority of cases there is no clue in the Greek text to differentiate between them. Usually the sense of the context will decide rather clearly; when that is inconclusive or controversial it will be so noted. There are some grammatical structures which identify some result clauses, they will be indicated.

In this study 597 clauses have been identified as final; 521 are classified as purpose clauses, 65 as result clauses, and 11 have been listed as doubtful.

Conjunctions Used

ἵνα (398), ἵνα μή (81), ἵνα μήποτε (1)

More than 8 out of 10 times (80.2%) the final conjunction is ἵνα or ἵνα μή. It is used in clauses classified as purpose (460), as result (10), and as doubtful (9). Its normal construction uses the subjunctive mood (464), but it occurs also with the indicative (11 times, 9 future and 2 present). In 4 cases the verb is omitted, hence the mood is not discernible. It is translated as "that" (206), "in order that" (66), "so that" (64), and by an infinitive (65). With the negative particle μή or μήποτε it is translated "in order that . . . not" (10), "that . . . not" (26), "so that . . . not" (15), or by "lest" (18).

²³See my article on "Relative Clauses," 240.

Ὅπως (38)

This conjunction is very similar to ἵνα in usage and meaning, but much less common. It is used almost totally in clearly purpose clauses, only twice in doubtful passages. It always has the subjunctive mood, except once the verb is omitted. The same translations are used for ὅπως as listed above for ἵνα, even approximately in the same proportion.

Μή (8), μήποτε (15)

The use of the negative particle μή as a conjunction equivalent to ἵνα μή in negative purpose clauses is rare (8 examples), only slightly more frequent when strengthened to μήποτε (15 examples). They all show the subjunctive mood, and the translations are simply the translations given for ἵνα μή above. Neither of these occur in clauses that have been classified as result clauses.

Ὡστε (53)

This conjunction is the only one that is specifically associated with result clauses. In classical Greek it was "used with the infinitive and with the indicative to express result. With the infinitive (the negative being μή), the result is stated as one which the action of the verb *tends* to produce; with the indicative (the negative is οὐ), as one which that action actually *does* produce."²⁴ Both constructions are found in the NT, although the difference between them is no longer strictly observed.²⁵

There are 53 clauses introduced by ὥστε in the NT. All but two have an infinitive verb. The two exceptions have an indicative verb. They are most frequently translated by "so that" or "so as to" plus an infinitive.

Ὡς (4)

Ὡς is a word with many and varied uses in the NT; its use in final clauses is rare. Twice with an infinitive it is a purpose clause, twice with the indicative it is a result clause.

²⁴Goodwin and Gulick, *Grammar*, 308.

²⁵The difference should not be construed as a complete change of the sense, but rather as a weakening of the distinction between them. A result actually produced would also be one *tending* to be produced, so ὥστε with infinitive would be possible in every case. In the NT the use of ὥστε with the indicative has almost disappeared, and the sense of actual results is taken over by the infinitive construction, which it could properly do. But ὥστε with infinitive still can express the result which tends to follow. It is not correct to insist that result clauses are always actually realized. This insight can help in the understanding of such passages as Mark 4:37, Luke 5:7, Acts 19:10, 12, Rom 7:6, 1 Cor 13:2.

"Οτι (1)

"Οτι introducing a result clause is surprising, and very rare; only one is so identified in this study (John 7:35). Result fits the sense well, and there seems to be evidence of other such uses.²⁶

Moods Used

The mood in final clauses is almost always subjunctive, as is to be expected in a clause which speaks of purpose, intent, of future outcome. But there are some which do not use the subjunctive. The largest group consists of 52 result clauses which show an infinitive as verb, a normal construction from classical times and in no sense an exception.

The seeming exceptions are 18 examples which use an indicative verb. Of these, 11 are future indicatives. Elsewhere²⁷ I have shown that the future indicative is very frequently in the NT a practical substitute for the aorist subjunctive. It is identical in form in many instances, and differs only in spelling in many others. Its sense is basically the same, expressing the potentiality that always is associated with the future. In the NT it is actually used in almost every syntactical construction that ordinarily uses the subjunctive. In the light of these facts it should not be considered strange or exceptional when a future indicative is used in a final clause.

Five indicatives are used with conjunctions which properly use the indicative. "Ωστε occurs twice with the indicative, a normal usage from classical times, and both expressing actual result. "Ως occurs twice with the indicative, again classical usage in result clauses. "Οτι universally uses the indicative, and while its use for a final clause is very unusual, its use of the indicative is not.

There remain two²⁸ indicatives which are significantly unusual. They are 1 Cor 4:6 ἵνα μή . . . φυσιοῦσθε "in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other," and Gal 4:17 ἵνα αὐτοὺς ζηλοῦτε "in order that you may seek them."

Grammarians suggest several explanations. A. T. Robertson²⁹ discusses the orthography and the possibility that by NT times the

²⁶BAGD, 589; John 14:22 "τί γέγονεν ὅτι . . . ; *what has happened, so that* (=to bring it about that) . . . ?" They suggest that this may possibly be the explanation also of 1 Tim 6:7 and Heb 2:6.

²⁷See my article, "The Classification of Subjunctives: A Statistical Study," *GTJ* 7 (1986) 16-19.

²⁸A third example is often listed, 1 John 5:20 ἵνα γινώσκωμεν. But there is textual variance in this case, and the NA26 and UBS3 texts have decided for the subjunctive γινώσκωμεν.

²⁹A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 203, 325.

indicative and subjunctive of -οω verbs have become alike as they are in -αιω verbs. Blass-Debrunner suggest the same; “φουσιουσθε 1 Cor 4:6 and ζηλουτε Gal 4:17 are subjunctives.”³⁰ In another place, apparently speaking more generally, they say “The present indicative after ἵνα is, of course, only a corruption of the text.”³¹ No one suggests that there is a difference in meaning intended by the use of the indicative after ἵνα.

Clause Order

Final clauses normally follow the main clause. This is true in all of the result clauses, and in all but 15 of the purpose clauses (97%). In 4 instances there is no main clause.

Other Final Constructions

Relatively infrequent is the use of the adverbial or circumstantial participle to express purpose. According to my count there are about 56 examples, five with the future participle which in classical was generally used in this way, but 48 with the present participle. Only three aorist participles are used thus in the NT.

Articular infinitives with certain prepositions are used to express purpose; εἰς τό (73) and πρὸς τό (11).³² At least one of these is understood to be expressing result in the NASB (1 Thess 2:16 εἰς τὸ ἀναπληρῶσαι αὐτῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας πάντοτε. “with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins.”

Another structure indirectly expressing purpose is a substantive or noun clause which structurally stands in apposition to a pronoun whose antecedent refers to a purpose. Example: Eph 6:22 δὲν ἐπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἵνα γνῶτε τὰ περὶ ἡμῶς “I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us . . .” If the words εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο were not present, the ἵνα clause would be a purpose clause; as it stands it is a noun clause in apposition to that phrase, stating the content of that purpose.³³

TEMPORAL CLAUSES

Meaning

Temporal Clauses are those which modify the main clause by relating it in some manner to the concept of time, answering such

³⁰F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and rev. by Robert Funk (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1961) 188.

³¹Ibid., 187.

³²See footnote 6.

³³See my article “Noun Clauses in the Greek NT: A Statistical Study,” *GTJ* 10 (1990) 225–39.

questions as “when?,” “how often?,” “how long?,” “before?,” “after?,” “until?,” “while?,” etc. A variety of conjunctions and conjunctive relative phrases occur, also more variety in the moods used.

Conjunctions Used

The subordinate temporal clauses included in this study are of two kinds. Most (360 or 86%) are introduced by proper conjunctions. The rest are introduced, not by conjunctions per se, but by relative phrases which function as temporal conjunctions, wither with or without the antecedent (ἡμέρας or χρόνου) of the relative being actually expressed. If the antecedent is present the clause can of course be considered a simple adjectival relative clause modifying a noun which is functioning as a temporal adverb. But they seem by their number and frequency to have become fixed expressions, virtual conjunctions.³⁴ Sixty such clauses are included in this list, and the relative phrase is listed as a conjunction.

Ὅταν (123), Ὅτε (102)

Ὅτε alone, and ὅταν, which is ὅτε + ἄν, comprise 54% of all temporal clauses. They are the less explicit in time relation, expressing simple concurrence. Most often they are translated by the NASB as “when” (197 times); ὅταν, reflecting the particle ἄν, is also translated “whenever” (10 times). Rarely they are translated more specifically as “after” (ὅτε 5, ὅταν 2), “while” (ὅτε 3, ὅταν 2), “as” (ὅτε once), and “as soon as” (once each), even “until” (ὅταν 2). These more specific renderings apparently are derived from the context rather than from the conjunction itself.

Ὅτε normally is followed by the indicative mood, only twice does the subjunctive appear; once the verb is left unexpressed. Ὅταν, as is expected with ἄν, normally uses the subjunctive (5 with indicative).

Ὅς (69), Ὅς ἄν (3)

Ὅς has many other uses, but as a temporal conjunction it occurs 72 times. These are translated with almost identical expressions as were ὅτε and ὅταν, most frequently “when” (Ὅς 50, Ὅς ἄν 1), also “while” (10), “after” (2), “whenever” and “as soon as” (once each). Renderings other than those used for ὅτε are “as” (5) and “since” (2).

With Ὅς the mood is indicative. When it is used with the indefinite particle ἄν the mood is subjunctive.

³⁴As we have already seen, they are not limited to temporal clauses. Similar phrases are found introducing causal clauses, and clauses expressing manner, degree or measure, a total of 90 NT examples. See my article, “Relative Clauses,” 238–40.

ἕως (18), ἕως ἄν (20), ἕως οὗ (17), ἕως ὅτου (5)

The conjunction ἕως occurs alone or with the indefinite particle ἄν 38 times. As a relative phrase which functions as a temporal conjunction it is found 22 times. They are translated "until" (54), "while" (4), and "as long as" (once). The basic meaning seems to refer to a period of time up to a designated point.

The mood is indicative 13 times, and subjunctive 45 times, once the verb is unexpressed. This is one of a group of words with the meaning "until" which involve some special rules regarding mood, and will be discussed separately below, under "Moods Used."

ἄχρι (5), ἄχρι ἧς (4), ἄχρι οὗ (4), ἄχρις οὗ (4), ἄχρις οὗ ἄν (1)

As a conjunction ἄχρι appears 5 times. More commonly (13) it appears in a conjunctive relative phrase. It is translated "until" in every instance except one, where "as long as" is used.

The mood is indicative 7 times and subjunctive 11 times. For the use of moods with words meaning "until" see below.

πρίν (8), πρίν ἥ (4), πρίν ἥ ἄν (1)

This is the only conjunction in the NT translated "before."

The usual construction with πρίν is with an infinitive following (11 times). Once it is followed by a subjunctive and once by an optative.

ἀφ' ἧς (6), ἀφ' οὗ (3), ἀφ' οὗ ἄν (1)

These are all relative phrases functioning as temporal conjunctions. Literally translated, the meaning would be "from which day, or time." The NASB translates them, 6 of the 10 times, by "since" (the others are freer, paraphrastic renderings: "once," "ago," even "for" and "that"). In every instance it is used in measuring time starting from a specific point; when that starting point is in the past the mood is indicative (9 times), when it is in the future the mood is subjunctive (1).

ἕως ὅσον (5), ὅσον χρόνον (1)

Again this is a relative phrase functioning as a conjunction. ὅσος is a correlative expressing a quantitative concept "how much"; the phrase thus means "for how much time." It is translated in every instance by "as long as" (5) or "so long as" (once), and it always uses the indicative mood.

ἐν ᾧ (4)

Another relative phrase in which the time word χρόνῳ is to be supplied, it carries the meaning "in (or during) which time." It is

translated "while" (3 times) and "until" (once). The mood is always indicative.

Μέχρι (1), Μέχρι οὐ (2)

Once it is a conjunction, twice it is in a relative phrase. Like its synonym ἄχρι it is translated "until." The mood is always subjunctive.

Ὅσάκις ἐάν (3)

Ὅσάκις is made up of the correlative ὅσος, "how much," and the adverbial ending -κις, "times"; thus "how many times." It is translated "as often as." It always has the indefinite particle ἐάν and is followed by the subjunctive mood.

Ἐπὶ (3)

Arising from ἐπεὶ (or ἐπειδή) plus the indefinite particle ἄν, this conjunction seems to be a full synonym of ὅταν (twice, in Luke 11:21, 22 and 11:34, they are used interchangeably in parallel sentences). Like ὅταν it is translated "when." It is indefinite and takes the subjunctive mood.

Ἐνίκα ἄν (1), Ἐνίκα ἐάν (1)

Both forms are identical, differing only in the spelling of the indefinite particle ἄν. Translated "whenever," it is indefinite and takes the subjunctive mood.

Ἐπειδή (1)

This conjunction is more frequently causal, but once it is temporal (Luke 7:1), translated "when." The mood is indicative.

Καθώς (1)

Καθώς is usually comparative or causal, but in one place it seems to be temporal (Acts 7:17). The NASB translates it "as." The mood is indicative.

Moods Used

Basic Principles

In the review of conjunctions we have already given statistics of the moods used with each. Unlike the causal and comparative clauses which were predominantly indicative, and the final which were subjunctive, these like the relative and conditional clauses freely use both moods. Here we shall discuss the basic distinctions which govern the

moods used, giving special attention to the seeming “exceptions” to those principles.

The choice between indicative and subjunctive in temporal clauses is determined by the distinction between actual and potential, and between specific and indefinite. If it speaks of a specific time past or present the indicative is the natural choice. If the time is future and thus unknown and doubtful, or if it is indefinite, the mood expected is subjunctive. These same factors also control the conjunctions used, so that there is a close correlation between the conjunction and the mood; we expect, for example, that *ὅτε* will use an indicative verb and that *ὅταν* will use a subjunctive.

Since these two conjunctions account for more than half of all the temporal clauses in the NT, we will use them as examples to illustrate the distinction between the moods. *Ὅτε* is followed by an indicative verb 102 times out of 104; once it introduces a clause which has no verb so the mood is not indicated, once it occurs with a subjunctive verb. Examining the indicatives, 92 times it is used of an actual historically past event, in four instances it speaks of actual contemporary time.³⁵ The other five are future in time (either a future indicative or a futuristic present indicative), but in every case they are specific (several have the form, “the hour is coming when . . .”).

In just one passage the NA26 text shows a possible place where *ὅτε* may be found with a subjunctive verb; in Luke 13:35. This will be discussed later, in the section on “Until Clauses.”

Ὅταν, which is simply the same *ὅτε* with the indefinite particle *άν*, is almost as exclusively followed by the subjunctive. There are 5 instances of *ὅταν* with the indicative. Three occur with statements of a general truth, “whenever,” which usually (44 times) is expressed with the subjunctive. One of these (Rev 4:9) has the future indicative, which as we have seen is practically synonymous with the subjunctive. The other two (Mark 3:11, 11:19) refer specifically to that which had happened repeatedly in past time, hence the indicative is appropriate.

That leaves two instances of *ὅταν* with the indicative which are more difficult to account for. Mark 11:25 seems clearly to be general and future, so that a subjunctive would be expected. There are textual variants showing a subjunctive form. Rev 8:1, after six times stating the same fact using *ὅτε* with the indicative, on the seventh of the series changes to *ὅταν* with the indicative. It is simple description of an actual event, past from the vantage-point of the writer, and with the same

³⁵In Mark 14:12 *ὅτε τὸ πάσχα ἔθουον* “the day . . . when the Passover is [always] sacrificed,” (my rendering) seems to be the imperfect of customary action. The NASB rendering, “When the Passover *lamb* was being sacrificed” is grammatically possible, but it seems impossible that the actual sacrificing was going on at the time when the disciples inquired about “preparing” for it.

sense as the first six. It clearly calls for a verb in the indicative. Apparently the problem is with the conjunction, and some texts read ὅτε.

With several other of the conjunctions the addition of the indefinite particle ἄν or ἔάν means a change from indicative to subjunctive, and for the same reasons. When the temporal clause is definite the mood is indicative, when the ἄν changes it to indefinite the mood changes to subjunctive. This is true with ὥς and ὥς ἄν, ἐπειδή and ἐπάν, ἀφ' οὗ and ἀφ' οὗ ἄν. Καθώς, ἐφ' ὅσον, and ἐν ᾧ do not use ἄν and are always indicative; ἡνίκα and ὁσάκις always have ἄν, and always use subjunctive.

“Until” Clauses

From classical times some special consideration was given to those temporal clauses which express the notion of “until.” The conjunctions involved were ἕως, ἔσται (not found in NT), ἄχρι and μέχρι. When they meant “while, so long as” they were regular in construction. But when they meant “until” they showed many peculiarities.

The same situation is mostly true of their NT use, but without some of the rather complicated “rules.” The list of conjunctions include some of the relative phrases we have described already, and the indefinite particle ἄν is not so strictly required, but the use is basically unchanged. When these words mean “until” two constructions occur. If the clause is referring to a definite past action the mood used is indicative. If they refer to an indefinite future action the mood is subjunctive. This statement of the case is probably over-simplified for the classical, but it will serve quite well for the NT pattern.

I have taken these conjunctions which are translated “until”³⁶ and in every instance evaluated the “point until which” intended, whether it is definite and past to the outlook of the speaker or writer, or potential (i.e., general or indefinite) future. The results were then compared with the actual structure used. These observations are the result.

(1) There are 76 passages in the list. Eighteen are indicative, and 58 subjunctive.

(2) In 12 instances the “time until” has been judged to be actually past. In every instance the mood used is indicative, and proper.

(3) The indicative is used in one passage (Rev 17:17) where the “time until” seems to be future from the standpoint of the persons involved, which might suggest a subjunctive verb. Two explanations

³⁶For the most part I have followed the NASB. In some instances they have used “until” where in my judgment the sense should be “while.” (For the lists in this section, see footnote 12 above.)

may be suggested. The time may be considered from the vantage of the One whose purpose was being executed and that purpose was a past reality. Or, it should be noted that the verb used is future indicative, which is often in Greek a substitute for the subjunctive. My preference is for this last explanation.

(4) In 63 instances the temporal clause has been judged to be future or indefinite, indicating the subjunctive should be expected. 58 of them are actually subjunctive, leaving 5 examples where the verb is indicative when we might expect the subjunctive.

Most difficult is Luke 13:35 οὐ μὴ ἴδῃτέ με ἕως [ἥξει ὅτε] εἴπητε “you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say . . .” A textual problem is apparent; does the verb εἴπητε go with ἕως or ὅτε? If the bracketed words are omitted it goes with ἕως and the subjunctive is proper (the time is indefinite future). If the bracketed words are left in εἴπητε must be construed with ὅτε and an indicative is indicated. Also, in that case ἕως governs ἥξει and that verb should be subjunctive. The NA26 edition puts the words in the text, but in brackets; the UBS3 edition gives the same text but gives the extra words a D (poor) rating. Westcott and Hort rejected them. The principle that the more difficult reading is more apt to be the correct one would argue for their inclusion, but perhaps that principle is not 100% correct.

The other four (Luke 19:13, John 21:22, 23, 1 Tim 4:13) are all of a similar nature. All are examples of the futuristic use of the present indicative of ἔρχομαι, “I am coming.” In each case the sense is future and the time is indefinite, indicating that a subjunctive verb should be expected. The nature of this particular verb may help to explain the indicative.

But there may be more than this involved. The first of these four has the conjunctive phrase ἐν ᾧ, which nowhere else means “until.” Even the NASB has in the margin the rendering, “while I am coming.” If we follow this meaning, it suggests that these present indicatives may be placing the emphasis on the meantime activity (“while”) rather than on the future point of termination (“until”). The last three examples use a different conjunction, ἕως, but ἕως too frequently means “while.”³⁷ If that is the case here, it makes the special “until” rule inapplicable and the present indicative are natural and proper.

Clause Order

Temporal clauses precede the main clause 267 times, or 63%, they follow the main clause 155 times.

³⁷Robertson, *Grammar*, 975, says, “When the present ind. appears with ἕως the notion is while, not ‘until.’” He lists another example, Mark 6:45.

Other Temporal Constructions

By far the most frequently used temporal construction in the NT is not the conjunctive clause, rather it is the adverbial or circumstantial participle. At least 765 participles function as the equivalent of a temporal clause. Of course these participles do not constitute “clauses” in the technical sense, but they contain every element of a clause: —the participle itself is a verb form, the subject of the clause is always the word with which the participle is in agreement. In most cases it is best to translate them by temporal clauses, in many cases it is impossible to do it any other way.³⁸ The precise temporal significance is not explicit and must be gathered from the tense used and the context.

Another prominent substitute for a temporal clause in the NT is the use of the articular infinitive with a preposition. Four prepositions are used in the temporal sense in this construction. Ἐν τῷ + infinitive is the most common (56 examples). It is always used of concurrent time (“in, or during, the time when,” and is usually translated “while.” Μετὰ τό + infinitive occurs 15 times, translated “after.” Πρὸ τοῦ + infinitive is found 9 times, translated “before.” Ἔως τοῦ + infinitive, once only in this construction, is translated “until.” Again, while these may not fit the definition of a clause, they function in every respect like a clause. Indeed, it is impossible to translate them into understandable English except by converting them into a clause.

LOCAL CLAUSES

Meaning

Local clauses, or locational to use a term parallel with temporal, are those which tell *where* the action of the main clause is located. It answers the question “where?” They are the fewest in number of all the kinds of clauses in the NT, but they still number 112.

Conjunctions Used

Ὅπου (72), Ὅπου ἂν / ἐάν (10)

The most frequent of the local conjunctions, it is translated “where” (61) and with ἐάν “wherever” (11), plus a variety of renderings once each, such as “from which,” “in which,” “on which,” “there,” even “since” and “whenever.” The last two are unusual departures from the normal sense, and to me seem unnecessary. In both instances (Mark 9:18, 1 Cor 3:3) a location in place is a natural and more vivid sense, even in English.

³⁸Listings of these temporal participles are available from the library at Grace Theological Seminary, in my *Supplemental Manual, Participles*.

Οὕ (22), οὗ ἑάν (1)

Οὕ, originally the genitive singular of the relative pronoun, came to be used as a conjunction of place, “where,” and with the indefinite particle ἑάν, “wherever.”

“Οθεν (7)

With the adverbial suffix -θεν, place “whence” or “from which,” ὅθεν is the equivalent of ἐκεῖθεν ὅπου “from the place where” or “from which.” It is translated “from which” (4), “from there” (1), and simply “there” (2).

Moods Used

When these clauses are without the indefinite particle ἄν or ἑάν the mood is always indicative. When the indefinite particle is present the mood is subjunctive with one exception. Mark 6:56 has ὅπου ἄν with an imperfect indicative. The sense seems clearly to be indefinite or general, the use of the imperfect with ἄν for a potential or iterative sense is classical.³⁹

Clause Order

Local clauses follow the main clause 75% of the time. The count is 84 following and 28 preceding.

³⁹Goodwin and Gulick, *Grammar*, 275–76.

BOOK REVIEWS

New Testament History, by Richard L. Niswonger. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988. Pp. 332. \$19.95.

Richard Niswonger, who teaches New Testament at John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Arkansas, has written a careful survey of the history of New Testament times. The book is not only a history of early Christianity, but is a very readable summary of Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds behind early Christian history. It is not by intention, however, a survey of the teachings of the New Testament. It is not, then, a primary textbook for a course in New Testament survey or New Testament introduction courses. The volume could serve as excellent parallel reading for such courses or for an introductory course in New Testament backgrounds.

Niswonger begins by considering the intertestamental period. His work here is detailed and up to date, including discussion of the Essenes, the developments in Greek and Roman cultures, and some attention to the various literature during this period. The next section focuses on the life of Christ. Niswonger's approach here adopts a harmonistic reading of the gospels. He wrestles with the complex issues of the historical reliability of the gospels and Acts. Here the reader will be helped by the recent IVP publication, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, by Craig Blomberg. Throughout, Niswonger adopts conservative evangelical positions on these matters.

The author then examines the history of the early church in the Book of Acts. This is one of the most helpful parts of the book. Here Niswonger draws parallels between the Acts account and the epistles. The book concludes with matters related to the General Epistles, Revelation, and non-canonical early Christian literature.

Niswonger is to be commended for taking difficult and complex material and conveying it in a most understandable manner. The book is nicely written and well organized. The survey style makes it most useful for the beginning college or seminary student, or the interested layperson. The pictures, lists, charts, and complete bibliography make the book a valuable source for all. For a more detailed account for advanced students, F. F. Bruce's history of the New Testament remains unsurpassed. Yet, for a beginning textbook on this subject, one needs to look no further for an excellent resource than Niswonger's *New Testament History*.

DAVID S. DOCKERY
SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Talk Thru the Bible, by Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990. Pp. 544. \$24.95. Cloth.

The cover states, "*Talk Thru the Bible* is a great reference book for *any* student of the Bible." This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance! The refreshing style which has come to be synonymous with all the Walk Thru Ministries is not missing here.

The unifying character of all Scripture is a keynote in this work. Every book of the Bible is treated under these headings: Introduction and Title, Author, Date and Setting, Theme and Purpose, Keys to —, Christ in —, Contribution to the Bible, Survey of —, Outline of —, as well as a strong graphic presentation of the book at the beginning of the treatment.

Additional helps in the form of well-constructed charts aid the student in grasping an overview of the Bible: a contrast of Ruth with Judges; a chart of Job and his three "comforters"; a summary of all the kings of Judah and Israel; the empires of Scriptural history; Gospel glimpses of Christ; distances in Palestine; themes in teaching of Christ; Paul's missionary journeys; contrast of First and Second Peter; the integration of the Old Testament; the integration of the New Testament. Some items are taken directly from the authors' work with Walk Thru the Bible seminars: structure of the New Testament; summary of Pauline Epistles; summary of non-Pauline Epistles; contrast of Genesis with Revelation; comparison of Second and Third John.

This is not a commentary! *Talk Thru the Bible* is more on the order of Baxter's *Explore the Bible*, a delightful work for every Christian, be he non-clergy or a full-time pastor, missionary or teacher of Christian education. It is warmly recommended. This reviewer feels that two volumes separately published would have been preferable to both in one book.

DONALD R. RICKARDS
NASHVILLE BIBLE COLLEGE

In the Beginning, by Nathan Aviezer. Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 1990. Pp. 138. \$15.95.

The author is a physics professor at Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv, Israel. He is a spokesman for contemporary Jewish thought on Bible-science matters. Aviezer describes himself as an "observant Jew" who depends on traditional Jewish commentators for understanding the Torah. Thus there are frequent references to the medieval writings of Radak (1160-1235), commentator and grammarian; Ramban (1194-1270) and Rashi (1140-1105), Talmudists and commentators.

Unfortunately, Aviezer does not adhere to the timeless, conservative truths taught by early scholars. Instead, he attempts to explain the Genesis creation account in terms of recent scientific thinking. Thus the first six days are taken as long phases in the development of the universe, beginning with the assumed big bang origin of the universe (p. 1). According to Aviezer's evolu-

tionary time scale, the creation days are long indeed, 2.5 billion years each. One wonders if the weakness and danger of this "modern science interpretation" of scripture will *ever* be realized by those who promote it. All secular science theories are forever transitory, by definition. Some theories are gradually modified; others are completely upset by paradigm revolutions. Interpreting Genesis using the latest pronouncement of science is somewhat similar to identifying the Antichrist from the front page of today's newspaper! In both cases, you will likely miss the truth completely. Meanwhile, a long trail of misleading "wreckage" will accumulate from false interpretations. Thus it is with the standard big bang model, so popular in recent years. Many have taken this temporary account of origins to be final truth. Previously, the steady state theory of universe origin was in vogue. In this decade, new science ideas will likely replace the big bang theory. Naturalistic origin theories roll on by with ever-shortening lifetimes of popularity. The refreshing alternative is a supernaturally created universe that is entirely beyond scientific explanation.

It was disappointing that author Aviezer did not discuss the significant contributions of his fellow Jewish scientists. The list of outstanding Jewish researchers reads like a Who's Who of modern physics: Albert Einstein, Robert Oppenheimer, Edward Teller, Arno Penzias, etc. God has blessed these scientists with remarkable insights into the details of the Creation. Aviezer missed an opportunity to discuss the unique contributions of Jewish science. The success must partially be due to the scientific emphasis of West European culture during this century. Perhaps the inquisitive Jewish mind toward the Creation is also at work.

The following series of quotes and comments reveals that physicist Aviezer accepts the questionable dogma of modern secular science:

"'Let there be light' [designates] the primeval fireball-the big bang" (p. 15). The big bang theory describes the Creation only if the Genesis account is completely rewritten. Apparently scientists such as Aviezer have no problem with this revision of scripture.

"Today, the theory of continental drift is accepted by every geologist" (p. 32). Such blanket statements show incorrect and careless treatment of complex issues. There are many questions and doubts concerning the movement of continents in the past.

"If the solar system consisted only of the sun and a spherical earth, then neither the length of the day nor the number of days in a year would ever change" (p. 44). This statement is completely false. The seasonal, changing length of daylight is due to the earth's tilt; the number of days per years depends on the earth's rotation. This book, which will be widely read, displays questionable scholarship on basic science.

"Our moon was formed from the remnants of the collision between a planetary body and the earth" (p. 48). This recent idea for the moon's beginning is no more credible than other lunar origin theories from past decades. Lunar origin by collision is very improbable, and collaborating evidence is lacking.

"Darwin's theory . . . has been buttressed by an extensive array of fossil evidence. The only doubters are a small group known as 'creationists,' who object on religious grounds. In fact, it is well known that the first animals were tiny marine organisms, and only much later did any large sea creatures appear" (pp. 53, 79). It is generally agreed by both creation and evolution scientists that the fossils do *not* give evidence of evolution. The multiple "missing links" between Biblical "kinds" have never been found!

"The verbs 'create' and 'make' clearly denote two quite different processes" (p. 60). Biblical scholarship has shown that the verbs *ʾāsâ* and *bārâ* in Genesis 1-2 are used interchangeably, with no inherent difference. Artificial distinctions made between the terms lead inevitably to confusion.

The subtitle of the book is "Biblical Creation and Science." Unfortunately the author has emphasized the latter term and lost sight of the former. The book may be of interest to collectors of Bible-science material. However, do not expect to find any new insights from Jewish physicist Aviezer. He presents the standard, worn arguments of Bible-science compromise. The attempts to read modern science into Scripture remain unconvincing and unsatisfying. The clear, literal message of the supernatural Genesis creation story is the only credible alternative.

DON B. DEYOUNG
GRACE COLLEGE

Grace Abounding. A Commentary on the Book of Hosea, by H. D. Beeby. International Theological Commentary edited by F. C. Holmgren and G. A. F. Knight. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. Pp. x + 189. \$12.95. Paper.

Beeby's commentary on Hosea falls well within the parameters of the International Theological Commentary series which seeks theological commentaries that go beyond a discussion of critical issues in order to apply the OT to the Christian church.

After a very brief introduction the commentary is divided into four sections. The first section (chaps. 1-3) concentrates on issues relating to Hosea's marriage and sets the stage for the whole book. The second section (chaps. 4-7) details Israel's sinful condition, while the third (chaps. 8-11) discusses Israel's "Spiritual History." The final section (chaps. 12-14) reviews Israel's past in recognition that the message flows toward the hope of chapter 14.

H. D. Beeby accepts an original prophet Hosea and chooses to work with the entire book as a canonical work. His emphasis is not upon historical matters, although some are mentioned, or upon critical issues but upon the later result of Jewish and Christian canonizers of the Bible. This does not mean that Hosea is understood as a unity but rather a work which passed through a long process of additions and reinterpretations.

Arguments in the Commentary about the absence of historical background matters in Hosea are disturbing. His view of 4:4-10 (extended to all of 4-14) is that historical details may have been removed by stages, first to strengthen the theological message and later, by editors from Judah, to reduce the stress on details which seemingly limited the message's authority. This argument, based upon the acceptance of a long redactionary process, is an argument from silence. Summarily stated, Beeby holds that "If the contemporary historical context were essential to our understanding, presumably the editors would have provided it rather than merely transmitting matters that would remain opaque" (p. 78).

The author, writing to church leaders and educators, uses the RSV as the basis for his comments and the JB as the most frequent version for comparison. He is aware of the difficulty of the Hebrew text and variants are noted where relevant to interpreting the message. Critical issues are not stressed but neither are they avoided. Attention is given to structural devices throughout the book while the use of specialized terms is de-emphasized (i.e., "sandwich pattern" or "courtroom atmosphere" for more technical terms).

Discussion of the theological message of Hosea, its development through time and its relevance for today are the concentrations of the book. The dominant unifying theme of Hosea (and of all Scripture) for Beeby is a theological schema he identifies as the "U pattern." This movement from "glory to glory" or "grace to grace" begins with God, moves through sin and redemption and culminates in God's grace. Constant stress is given to parts of this pattern but its clearest expression for Beeby occurs in Hosea 11. Within this pattern he sees the knowledge of God as the basic theme of Hosea.

Analysis of the message of Hosea is enriched by discussions of key words which bear significantly upon major themes. Continual visibility of concepts such as ambivalence, autonomy or dialog, especially God's dialog with Himself, as well as comments relating to current issues, like ecology or technology, also enhance this work. A number of interesting observations are made on details of the text, and Beeby frequently points out unique phrases and first occurrences in the book of Hosea. Notable is the visibility given to New Testament passages and the accent placed upon faith producing thoughts worthy of consideration.

In this reviewer's estimation the book's greatest weakness stems from the author's view of Hosea as a somewhat "flexible text" which developed away from its historical roots. This view which allows Beeby to hold that a later editorial addition may then "have greater meaning for us than if it were original to Hosea" (p. 79) creates an unhealthy dichotomy between historical background and theological message. In addition this volume has limited emphasis on one of the objectives of the series; namely, the choice of authors who are outside of a "Western" orientation for the benefit of their insights from another perspective. This commentary would be of interest to someone who already has some background in the book of Hosea, but it would not be a primary recommendation to those who are beginning to work with Hosea.

ROBERT D. SPENDER
THE KING'S COLLEGE

1, 2 Kings, by T. R. Hobbs, and *Hosea-Jonah*, by Douglas Stuart. Word Biblical Themes. Waco: Word, 1989. Pp. xiii + 104 and x + 121. \$9.99 ea. Cloth.

The appearance of these two volumes continues the publishing of the Word Biblical Themes series, designed to be a companion to the Word Biblical Commentary (WBC). Both books are authored by respected scholars who wrote major commentaries on the same areas in the commentary series. (For T. R. Hobbs' commentary on 2 Kings, see *GTJ* 9/1, Spring 1988, pp. 142-45.)

Hobbs begins his volume by reemphasizing a point that he had made in his commentary: that the "deuteronomistic" author of Kings wrote a history that both takes as its perspective "a distinct prophetic flavor" (p. 2) and "a cohesive narrative of the history of his people, which would demonstrate the validity of the principles set out in the book of Deuteronomy" (p. 4). Using various sources at his disposal the author, who lived during the exile in Babylon, produced a work that forms the climax to the whole "deuteronomistic history" (Joshua-Kings).

In the pages that follow, Hobbs treats a number of important OT topics that are also found specifically in Kings. He begins by considering the role of the king himself, emphasized in the stories that make up the narrative portions of Kings. For Hobbs, the author of Kings is concerned to show that kingship in Israel was properly to be limited by "the king's submission to the Torah, exclusive worship of God, and proper treatment of the people" (p. 18). Hobbs reinforces this deuteronomistic thesis by illustrating it with stories drawn from good and bad examples from the lives of David and Solomon and selected kings of the divided monarchy.

Hobbs goes on to comment on the important role of the prophet in relation to Israel's kings and national policy by pointing out that the deuteronomist believed that major events in the nation's history became meaningful only through God's word as delivered by authoritative prophets. Hobbs devotes considerable space to examining such prophetic themes in Kings as promise-fulfillment, reciprocal compassion, the exclusive worship of Yahweh, justice, and the prophetic task itself.

Hobbs' further chapters include an examination of the themes of (1) the people of God as recipients of God's gracious covenant at the Exodus and (2) the land as God's gracious gift to his people. Under the provisions of the covenant, the people were called on to serve their king, himself responsible for their welfare, and to worship God both in the sacrifices and in their daily conduct. The latter theme emphasizes the fact that God's people were to care for the land as stewards of God.

In Hobbs' final discussions, he considers the twin theological themes of sin and judgment, and hope and God's anger. In the former case he includes a catalog of words for sin found in Kings and reemphasizes the importance of the Torah to Israel's spiritual standing. In the latter instance he points out that although God's righteous anger had justly brought judgment to his people, there was yet a note of hope and resolution throughout the book, for a repentant Israel was related to the gracious and merciful God who had brought her out of Egypt. By these themes, then, the author of Kings proves himself to

be a critic of his nation who "pulled his resources together to instruct, to condemn, and also to encourage. His knowledge of God is of a God whose disposition is one of grace, and on this he builds a platform for future hope" (pp. 92-93).

Stuart begins his volume with a rapid overview of the prophets Hosea, Amos, Joel, Obadiah, and Jonah in which he emphasizes the date and setting of the prophecies, and the basic problems that occasioned their writing. He then plunges into those themes that he finds most compelling in each of these prophetic books. In discussing Hosea, Stuart stresses the importance of the theme of God's covenant with Israel, disloyalty to which would bring serious consequences. He reminds his readers that "some stipulations of the old covenant have been renewed in the new" (p. 13), a fact that regulates the lives of contemporary believers in Christ. Stuart also explores the motif of Yahweh's "wife" and "child," metaphors based on family relationships used to express Israel's relation to God (pp. 33-40), examines key ideas such as "people" and "prostitution," and discusses such theological subjects as: sin and guilt, law, idolatry, and the place of Israel as a people from distant past to eschatological future. "From 2000 B.C. (Admah and Zeboiim) to a time yet in the future for us, the long view on Israel was given. There was no excuse for anyone who listened to Hosea to fail to see the plan of God" (p. 44).

Stuart develops his consideration of Joel around the theological theme of the Day of the Lord, which occurs some five times in the book and is "like a title or summary phrase in each of its usages" and is for all practical purposes "the subject of the book of Joel" (p. 46). He also discusses such topics as lament and conquest, and Joel's contribution to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Turning to Amos, Stuart emphasizes Amos' great concern for Yahweh's universal sovereignty. He also examines Amos' cries for social justice and his condemnation of Israel's corrupt leadership. Stuart views Amos as God's messenger who, though he must announce Israel's judgment and exile, nonetheless intercedes on her behalf with God. Amos thus walked a delicate line. While he knew full well that Israel must be judged and he should not try to "show his influence with the Lord by challenging his plans," he "prayed for grace to be shown to the disobedient nation he had been sent to preach to" (p. 87).

Stuart brings his discussions to a close by considering themes found in two prophets who prophesied to foreign peoples. He reminds his readers that "the oracles against foreign nations thus do not imply that only ethnic Israelites could be saved or blessed in Old Testament times"; indeed, although God had his own special people, he "had given opportunity to others to join that people or to support them rather than oppose them" (p. 90). Those who opposed his people thus found themselves opposing God. Obadiah was concerned with Edom, a people that continually opposed God's chosen nation. The Edomites needed to be reminded that "Mount Zion/Jerusalem would be the location of the future government of God over all the world on behalf of his people" (p. 93). Jonah, on the other hand, labored under the misconception that Israel had an exclusive claim on God's love. Stuart considers this to be a form of hypocrisy. "Grateful to be blessed by divine mercy himself, he was not at all eager to see God give similar mercy to his enemies" (p. 99). Because the book of Jonah informs its readers of God's love for all, it also speaks of God's

forgiveness. Stuart appropriately ends his study by challenging us who know God's forgiveness in Christ as to whether we might be as guilty as Jonah in resenting God's forgiving of "evil people" or "those who have harmed us" (p. 107).

Books of this type are somewhat difficult to evaluate. First, both terms in the title of the series, "Biblical Themes," can be construed in a number of ways. Indeed, judged upon the discussions in these two books, "themes" is used freely of such matters as: subjects, topics, motifs, literary figures, key words, and theological terms. Moreover, since the selection of a given "theme" may be due to its predominance in the book under consideration or because of the presence in the book of "themes" which are found in other parts of the Scriptures, the term "biblical" can take on a narrower or wider intention.

Second, one can always second guess the author's selection of themes. For example, in Hosea one could suggest a fuller treatment of the marriage theme (e.g., "the unfaithful wife" and the "husband and wife" motifs) and such motifs as those of "the vine and the vineyard" (2:12; 9:10; 10:1-2; 14:7), "the harvest and the wine" (2:9, 21-23; 6:11; 9:2-4; 10:11-13; 14:7), or in Jonah the utilization of such themes as "life and death" that pervade the whole book, or such motifs as the "three days and three nights" (1:17) and the "left hand/right hand" (4:11), as well as the matter of Jonah's use of such literary features as satire and/or tragedy. However, such choices must of necessity be somewhat subjective.

The more important question is whether the author has come to grips with the basic theme and crucial emphases of a given book and whether he has communicated these ideas well to his readers. Based on these questions and judged on the series' own terms of being designed to "trace important subjects systematically within a given book of Scripture" and to distill and serve up "the theological essence of a book of Scripture . . . in ways that will enrich the preaching, teaching, worship, and discipleship of God's people" (p. ix), these two books must be considered a resounding success.

RICHARD PATTERSON
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

The First Epistle to the Corinthians, by Gordon D. Fee. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987. Pp. 880. Cloth.

It is normally the policy of *GTJ* not to review volumes which are more than two years old. An exception is made in this case in order to alert any of our readership which may not be aware of Fee's contribution to the interpretation of I Corinthians.

Since a number of reviews have appeared (cf., e.g., *The Bible Translator* 39 [July 1988]: 344-45; *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* [October 1988]: 715-17; *Crux* 24 [March 1988]: 33-35; *Perkins Journal* 41 [July 1988]; *Novum Testamentum* 31 [1989]: 185-86), the reader is referred to these and others for a more detailed analysis. The present review will highlight a few of the strengths of the volume

and share a statistical analysis which Fee himself distributed for those who have an interest in the text critical analysis which Fee includes in his commentary.

This commentary replaces the original work on 1 Corinthians by F. W. Grosheide in the New International Commentary on the New Testament. This commentary series is undergoing individual volume revision and replacement and those who maintain sets should keep abreast of such developments.

Fee has provided a model for combining sound and thorough scholarly exegesis into a readable format which addresses the needs of any serious Bible student be they teacher, student, pastor, missionary or whomever. The length of the book may frighten the more timid or the pastor who feels he is "too busy" for such detail, but it should still be consulted as one would a dictionary. Most readers would find themselves drawn into a more careful reading as they see the benefits to such an approach.

The major contribution of Fee is threefold. First, the historical and literary idiosyncrasies of 1 Corinthians in relation to the occasion for Paul's writing the book, as reconstructed by Fee, are kept ever before the reader. The nature of 1 Corinthians demands such an approach. Fee avoids textual isolation admirably. Second, the discussion is detailed and adequately documented so that the researcher can reevaluate the commentator's analysis. And, third, Fee has provided an extended text critical analysis of 1 Corinthians. The well-known *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* by Bruce Metzger contains about 93 citations on textual issues in 1 Corinthians; Fee has included 251 textual notes and discussions.

Rather than commenting on individual points of interpretation, this review will conclude by quoting from a handout distributed by Fee in a seminar on "The Present State of the Text of 1 Corinthians" at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Boston, 1987. It is assumed that Fee's summary will be of interest to those who work on text critical issues in 1 Corinthians.

"The statistical analysis can be very simply presented. Of the 251 textual notes or discussions:

1. 117 involve a reading over against the Majority Text.
2. 5 are discussed without making up my mind (4:17; 5:2 [*praxas/poiesas*]; 6:16; 7:34; 15:10).
3. In 3 instances I follow the UBS-NA26 text in adopting a Majority Text reading over against the heart of the early Egyptian tradition (4:2; 6:14; 10:9).
4. In 1 instance I follow Zuntz in doing the same (13:11 [word order]).
5. Altogether there are 19 instances where I adopt a text over against the UBS-NA26 (1:2; 2:1; 2:4; 2:10 [*gar/de*]; 3:10 [add/omit *tou theou*]; 6:11; 7:15; 8:2-3; 9:13; 10:2; 11:15; 11:17; 13:11 [word order]; 14:14; 14:34-35; 15:10 [?]; 15:28; 15:31 [add/omit *adelphoi*]; 15:49). It should be noted that in many of these I have opted for a reading also favored by Zuntz.
6. There are 24 instances where I adopt a text over against Zuntz (1:2; 1:8; 2:10 [*gar/de*]; 2:14; 3:2; 3:3; 3:10 [omit *de*]; 5:4; 6:5; 7:7; 8:8; 8:10; 9:5; 9:9 [omit "law of Moses"]; 10:5; 12:10; 12:24; 13:3; 13:4; 14:37; 14:38; 14:40; 15:31 [omit "Christ Jesus our"]).

7. In only 2 instances (underlined) have I adopted a reading over against *both* UBS-NA26 and Zuntz (these are two of three readings which I defended in a paper read before this society two years ago).
8. There are 17 discussions that reject variants adopted by various other scholars, including the proposed emendation at 4:6."

It is hoped that this out-of-the-ordinary review will be of help to some and a stimulus to all to add this volume to their library.

GARY T. MEADORS
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

1 Peter (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), by Wayne A. Grudem. Leicester: IVP/Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. Pp. 239. n.p. Paper.

This recent contribution to the TNTC replacement series supersedes the smaller and dated 1959 work by A. M. Stibbs and A. F. Walls. It utilizes the RSV text (apparently the author's choice; see the general editor prefatory note on p. 6), as opposed to the AV in the earlier commentary.

Grudem is now Associate Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. However, he previously taught New Testament, and is well qualified for his task of addressing this challenging letter. Whether or not the reader agrees with every exegetical decision, the evidence is persuasive that Grudem has "done his homework" and deserves a thoughtful hearing.

On the other hand, the new Tyndale series is not designed to be a full-blown critical commentary. Changing times and reader needs have required some shifting of philosophy, and new data and viewpoints require attention (p. 5). But, full technical discussions are outside the purview of the series. (The reader seeking such up-to-date material might cautiously consult J. R. Michaels, *1 Peter* [Word Biblical Commentaries], Waco: Word, 1988; or the forthcoming volumes in the NIGNT and Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary projects. For a less technical approach see E. A. Blum, "1 Peter" in *Expositors Bible Commentary*, Vol. 12).

Relatedly, one interesting aspect of Grudem's approach is worth mentioning. Unlike some exegetical works in which there is almost as much interaction with other "big name" commentators and scholars as with the biblical text itself, Grudem has intentionally veered in another direction. He explains, "This commentary probably has a higher than average frequency of citation from other ancient texts . . . and a lower than average frequency of citations from other commentaries. . . . It is very important for Christians to come to accept a particular interpretation of any verse *not* because [of] some expert . . . but because they have seen for themselves the evidence . . ." (p. 10).

In the estimation of this reviewer, Grudem should be applauded for choosing such a courageous path. Certainly, to ignore the crucial contributions of writers throughout church history is to arrogantly "act as if the Holy Spirit hasn't been operative since biblical times until you," a point forcefully made in

this reviewer's hearing by S. L. Johnson, Jr., Grudem's former colleague. However, to defer too much to such divines is to risk a "peer pressure" exegetical decision that may be little more than subtle eisegesis. Happily, there is the middle ground approach of reading Grudem's discussions with other substantial treatments alongside in dialogue.

On the introductory questions (pp. 21-43), Grudem has marshaled the evidence well, arriving at conservative, yet fully up-to-date conclusions. His perceptive answers to "Objections to Petrine Authorship" (pp. 24-33) are particularly helpful. His outline of 1 Peter (pp. 44-46), though perhaps more expositional/practical than exegetical, is quite helpful in grasping the flow of the book. Note, however, the error on pp. 45 and 145, where "Living as Christians Generally" should extend from 3:8-4:19 (not stop at 3:22).

Grudem's concluding Appendix (pp. 203-39), "Christ Preaching through Noah: 1 Peter 3:19-20 in the Light of Dominant Themes in Jewish Literature," may prove to be one of, if not *the*, most controversial parts of this commentary. Although this reviewer considers Grudem's argumentation to be well organized and substantially persuasive, he is cutting "across the grain" of the opinions of many evangelical thinkers (although see J. Feinberg's similar view in *WTJ* 48 [1986]: 303-36).

All in all, Grudem's work in *1 Peter* is highly recommended. This reviewer did not agree with the treatment at every point (e.g., the minimal reflection on Peter's "rocky" theological basis, in Matt 16:18, behind 1 Pet 2:4ff.). Yet, as evangelicals continue to move rapidly into a new generation of biblical reference works, Grudem's volume offers a decidedly positive example for the craft of commentary.

A. BOYD LUTER

TALBOT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Interpreting the Pauline Epistles, by Thomas R. Schreiner. Guides to New Testament Exegesis 5, edited by Scott McKnight. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. Pp. 167. n.p. Paper.

This is the third volume to appear in the projected seven-volume series on Guides to New Testament Exegesis. The first volume published was *Interpreting the Synoptic Gospels*, by Scott McKnight in 1988. In 1989, *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*, a multi-author volume edited by McKnight was released. Volumes on John, Acts, Hebrews and Revelation are forthcoming.

McKnight identified the motive for this series in his preface to the volume on the synoptics by saying "the vision for this series comes from Gordon Fee's introduction to New Testament exegesis [*New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983]. Without minimizing the important contribution Fee has made to New Testament study, this series goes beyond what he has presented. It intends to develop, as it were, *handbooks* [emphasis mine] for each of the genres of the New Testament" (p. 10). McKnight has undertaken a noble and needful enterprise. Professors who teach NT exegesis—of which I am one—are concerned to instill in their

students an inductive methodological approach to interpretation rather than merely dispensing interpretive results welcome such a series. Since this series affirms an evangelical perspective in reference to the text of Scripture, it is hoped that it will provide guidance to the evangelical student concerning useful methodological aspects from current approaches to the text which can be utilized within the framework of evangelical presuppositions.

Schreiner gives us nine chapters which seem to reflect (p. 127) his view of order in exegesis: Understanding the nature of letters (28 pp.), doing textual criticism (5 pp.), translating and analyzing the letter (4 pp.), investigating historical and introductory issues (15 pp.), diagramming and conducting a grammatical analysis (20 pp.), tracing the argument (30 pp.), doing lexical studies (8 pp.), probing the theological context (16 pp.), and delineating the significance of Paul's letters (9 pp.). The reader will discover that the distribution of pages to topics does reveal the writer's interests and will affect the use of this volume as a working "guide" to exegesis.

It is my observation that of the three volumes published thus far McKnight's work on the synoptics comes the closest to fulfilling the promise to provide a "handbook" (the volume on introduction has a different purpose and would therefore not be handbook oriented) approach to exegesis. Schreiner's work on Paul fulfills this commitment much less than McKnight. Schreiner has a tendency merely to inform the reader in a survey fashion concerning the area under investigation rather than to format his composition with a "how to" orientation. This is particularly true in chapter 8, "Probing the Theological Context." Schreiner shares useful information, but he does not provide a working student with a handbook approach. Even in the section which claims to be "how" in chapter 8 (pp. 142-45), Schreiner shares his insights and what he sees as important issues, but he does not adequately address a process of investigation. It is good collateral reading but it is not a handbook.

I also find chapters 2, 4, and 7—on textual criticism, historical and introductory issues, and lexical studies—to be disappointing. Once again, they have some very useful things to say (these chapters are slightly better than chapter 8), but they are still inadequate if judged by the promise to provide "handbooks." Students will be generally informed (although some of these chapters are so brief they will not adequately be informed even at an introductory level) but they will not, as in Fee's model, be given a series of steps which are reasonably comprehensive to do exegesis.

The two chapters which do obtain the feel of a handbook are chapter 5 on diagrammatical analysis and chapter 6 on tracing a Pauline argument.

The chapter on diagramming is somewhat ironic in light of current trends to downplay traditional line diagramming for a block diagram (cf. Kaiser) and to emphasize linguistic and discourse analysis as a means to access the deeper levels of meaning within the text. I am pleased that Schreiner included this chapter, however, because I concur with his observation that traditional diagramming is one of the most helpful ways to learn grammar and do a close reading of the text. It would be helpful in future editions to include alternate methods of grammatical analysis and to point out that diagramming often demands interpretation in order to diagram rather than producing interpretation by the diagram (he does not claim the latter, but some assume such).

The unique contribution of Schreiner's work is in chapter 6, "Tracing the Argument." He credits the framework of this chapter to instruction from his mentor Daniel Fuller, although Schreiner observes that it does not fully reflect Fuller's approach. This chapter best fits the model of a handbook approach. It also exposes an interesting methodology to a wider audience. The method presented in this brief chapter is worthy of more detailed development.

Schreiner has provided the student with a basic bibliographic pool from which to work. The works suggested reflect good judgment. One does wonder why the new Louw and Nida, *Greek English Lexicon*, is not cited in the chapter on lexical study.

The lack of any index is bothersome. In an age when most publications are computer generated, indexes should be included.

In summary, if the works in this series are to be judged in light of the stated purpose of being "guides to New Testament exegesis," Schreiner has given us a mixed bag. The quality and comprehensiveness (even allowing a limited purpose) of the individual chapters vary greatly. In most cases, the book will not be used as a guide but will provide another entry for collateral reading. In spite of its weaknesses, the reviewer will utilize this volume as a supplement to his course and would recommend others to consider it as well.

GARY T. MEADORS

GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Difficult Passages in the New Testament: Interpreting Puzzling Texts in the Gospels and Epistles, by Robert H. Stein. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. Pp. 392. n.p. Cloth.

This book is a compilation of three previous books by the author: *Difficult Passages in the Gospels* (1984), *Difficult Sayings in the Gospels* (1985), and *Difficult Passages in the Epistles* (1988). He has written extensively on the theme of difficulties in the New Testament and is well qualified on the subject.

Stein does not hesitate to confront apparent difficulties head-on. His selection of thorny passages, which the average reader overlooks either from ignorance of their presence or from fear of finding the unexplainable, is drawn from all parts of the Gospels and the Epistles. As the proverb goes, the author does not merely hand out fish but teaches the student of Scripture how to fish for himself.

Part I treats the parallel accounts in the Gospels, particularly the Synoptics, and the difficulty emerging from Jesus' actions and sayings. Part II includes the very valuable listing of thirteen rules for detecting exaggeration and hyperbole in Christ's sayings. For evangelicals, it is important not to minimize the existence in Scripture of literary devices prevalent in Jesus' and the Gospel writers' own period of history. Failing to note a device such as exaggeration will inevitably lead to misunderstanding the biblical text. Part III lays down the step-by-step exegetical investigation of Scripture which is necessary for the proper interpretation of the Word of God. This part is concise and

precise and a miniature handbook on the subject. The book concludes with a Scripture index. The entire work is heartily recommended for the reader and the student of Scripture.

DONALD R. RICKARDS
NASHVILLE BIBLE COLLEGE

A Christian Philosophy of Education, by Gordon H. Clark. Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1988. Pp. 258. \$8.95. Paper.

This volume is a republication of Gordon H. Clark's 1946 text advancing Christian theism as the only intellectually defensible system of thought capable of integrating truth and supporting civilization. He espouses a reformed theology with a high view of man's reason and intellect as endowed in God's image.

For Clark, a Christian philosophy of education is premised upon Biblical authority. In this and the parallel presupposition that God exists, no neutrality is possible. Truth exists because God immutably exists and has revealed Himself in His Word. Truth does not change, for if truth changes, there is no truth. Public educators reject these foundational faith assumptions and thus develop humanistic worldviews that provide no real basis for curricula.

Clark is aghast at the state of contemporary public education. He believes government supported education is inevitably secularistic, naturalistic, aphilo-sophical, and anti-intellectual. He bemoans the degree to which public education has been captured by vocational education, relinquishing classical concerns for the liberal arts. In Clark's view, narrow technocratic training produces "expert ignoramuses." Students in public education and particularly in vocational education end up with more access to the physical means of life, but with a decreased understanding of the purpose of life. Clark argues that "civilization must be protected from public education." Christian education is a necessity.

While Clark's arguments are worth considering, they at times sound reactionary. He asserts that the conservative right wing is the only protection of good schools and that the deterioration of modern educational curricula is the responsibility of political liberalism. Indeed, liberal professors have fostered a widespread anti-Americanism leading to armed robbery, murder, arson, and dope in the public schools. Clark's attitude is also, at times, elitist, although he prefers the term aristocratic.

Clark wishes to develop an educational system that will completely furnish Christians unto every good work, a system of Christian schools that will provide "a knowledge of Christianity as it embraces the whole of life." He is rightly concerned about the number of colleges that seem in the name of academic advancement to have forsaken the tenets of their original missions. His solution to the challenge of preserving a college's original purpose is fourfold: a detailed basis of faith, preferably the Westminster Confession; selection of students from friendly constituencies; constant reiteration of the institution's purpose; construction of courses in conformity with the faith.

Readers will not accept every argument the author makes, but the philosophy advanced in this text is important. Clark's Christian philosophy of educa-

tion needs to be articulated more today than when the author first developed it. Public education is rudderless. Universities are diversities. Unfortunately, Christian education is also plagued by malaise.

Clark's sense of the wholeness or "integrity" of a theistic world-life view deserves more discussion and expression among Christian faculty. As Carl F. H. Henry has noted several times, world-life view elaboration is a serious task. Christian education is the significant hope for promulgating Christian philosophy in a non-Christian age, but it must remain true to truth.

REX M. ROGERS
THE KING'S COLLEGE

Thales to Dewey, by Gordon H. Clark. Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1989 revision of 1957 edition. Pp. 561. \$11.95. Paper.

When it first appeared in 1957, this book quickly became a text for Christian college classes in the history of philosophy. Now in a slightly revised edition it is again available for that readership and for all serious students of philosophy. The late Gordon H. Clark was one of the most penetrating thinkers and prolific authors of the twentieth century, and all who seek to compose a biblical *Weltanschauung* should become familiar with his works.

This is not a book for novices. The author defined his purpose as "bringing the student up to philosophy's level," since it is impossible to bring "philosophy down to the student's level" (p. vii). Readers should therefore prepare for a rigorous intellectual exercise, one which may require re-reading some portions and one which will surely demand much reflection. Those willing to make such an investment in time and mental effort should find the experience highly rewarding.

Thales to Dewey is an interpretive survey from ancient Greece to modern times with special attention to views about ontology, epistemology, ethics, etc. Clark gave careful attention to how each thinker pursued knowledge and to the presuppositions he brought to the task. Always he tried to explain the historical conditions that formed the context out of which philosophers have written, for "the history of philosophy is philosophy" (p. 5).

The quantity of attention given to particular figures and schools of thought, of course, varies considerably. The quality of Clark's perception is, however, uniformly intelligent and sometimes brilliant. The sections about Stoicism, Rationalism, and British Empiricism are especially insightful.

Although Professor Clark wrote from the perspective of a convinced Presbyterian, his judgments upon non-Christian thinkers were not harsh. Often they are implicit rather than overt in this work. His treatment of St. Augustine, for whom he obviously had great admiration, is perhaps the best part of this fine book. Too much untranslated Latin will create difficulty for some readers, and a glossary of philosophic terms would be a great aid to those unfamiliar with the technical vocabulary Clark employed. The absence of documentation is an annoying weakness. Why the author placed Philo of Alexandria and the Church Fathers in the Middle Ages is unclear, and citing

the fall of Constantinople (p. 1453) as the cause of the Renaissance is an odd mistake, coming from a writer so well informed about history. *Thales to Dewey* is, nevertheless, a useful treatise by an amazingly learned scholar.

JAMES EDWARD MCGOLDRICK
CEDARVILLE COLLEGE

The Actuality of Atonement: A Study of Metaphor, Rationality and the Christian Tradition, by Colin E. Gunton. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989. Pp. 222. \$24.95. Cloth.

Narrow Enlightenment conceptions of rationality can prove surprisingly difficult to shed. One of these is the focus of Gunton's fine book. On what Gunton takes to be unjustifiably confining conceptions of rationality, epitomized in such thinkers as Kant, Schleiermacher and Hegel, what cannot be expressed in literal, conceptually perspicacious language cannot be the content of rational belief. Whatever is irreducibly metaphorical in the Christian confession should be discarded. However, in Gunton's view, late-Enlightenment attempts to preserve the essence of Christian belief by reducing it to the allegedly non-metaphorical language of ethics (Kant), psychology (Schleiermacher), and metaphysics (Hegel) fail because they replace the Christian faith with theories of human autonomy which imply that human beings are capable of saving themselves.

Metaphor, Gunton argues, is indispensable for a rational understanding of reality. The creation of metaphor, where we violate the conventions of past discourse in order to speak in a way that captures some hitherto unrecognized feature of the world, is where our language is truly rational, in virtue of being shaped by the world it is intended to describe. Metaphorical language is the primary vehicle for the expression of rational human thought.

What, specifically, can we make of the great metaphors that lie at the center of the Christian faith, viz. the metaphors of battle and victory, legal justification, and ritual sacrifice that the Bible and the Church have used to describe the atonement? To rationalist critics and even some of the orthodox these metaphors have often seemed crude and mythological, but Gunton wants to show that they are indispensable for telling the truth about the atonement.

Gunton contends that describing the atonement in metaphorical terms drawn from the battlefield, so that Christ is said to have defeated the demonic powers, is necessary because the evil from which human beings need to be delivered cannot be realistically described in a literal way. Humankind is helpless in the face of powers not fully explicable in ordinary moral and psychological terms. These powerful realities transcend and overwhelm human beings. Describing Jesus as the victor who liberates us from them enables us to grasp this aspect of God's action on our behalf in ways that would be impossible without the resort to metaphor. Speaking metaphorically is not to be contrasted with saying what is really true; it is the only way to render faithfully this aspect of the significance of Jesus Christ. "The cross is metaphorically but really a victory" (77).

Scripture and tradition also speak of the work of Christ in terminology drawn from the world of law. In Gunton's view, the Bible's forensic metaphors focus our attention on the significance of human responsibility for sin which is not a personal affront to God so much as a disordering of the cosmos. Here he assumes, probably mistakenly, that since God cannot be harmed by human actions he cannot be wronged by them. Describing the death of Christ as the payment of a legal penalty that makes satisfaction for sin is, he declares, a metaphorical but true account of the God who assumes ultimate responsibility for restoring the cosmos that human sin has disordered without thereby treating human wrongdoing as a trivial matter. Gunton places the forensic metaphors in their proper context, which is not that of abstract moral and legal principles, but the concrete reality of God's justice, which takes its meaning from God's covenant relation to his creation and his commitment to do whatever it takes to restore human beings to life in that relationship.

Along with the terminology of the law court and the battlefield the biblical authors use the language of ritual sacrifice. When forensic categories are at work, sin is construed as lawbreaking, but when the metaphors have to do with sacrifice, sin is taken to be uncleanness brought about by a blurring of the distinct categories of the creation. A sacrifice cleanses the transgressor and restores the disordered cosmos. To describe the atonement as a sacrifice is to denote the fact that in Jesus Christ the destructive effects of man's revolt against the Creator, both within the individual and in the cosmos at large, are being removed by God's initiative.

Gunton takes pains to emphasize the importance of the transition from theological theory to Christian practice. Metaphor dies if it does not reshape the lives of those who hear and speak it. The Church lives in the truth of Christ's victory over the powers only when it develops a form of life in which idolatrous perversions of God's creation are shown to be on the way to defeat. The forensic metaphors of divine justice in the atonement come alive only when the Church is truly a community of reconciliation and forgiveness. And the metaphor of the great sacrifice takes its life from the life of the Christian community engaged in the sacrifice of praise to God.

Gunton's aim in this rich and complex book is to explicate the objective reality of the atonement in ways that avoid both an Enlightenment rationalism that eliminates the metaphors and a conservative rationalism that seeks to preserve the actuality of the atonement by treating the biblical metaphors as though they were literal, rather than metaphorical, truths. There is an unresolved, and perhaps unresolvable, tension in Gunton's project. To the extent that he succeeds in telling us, in his own relatively non-metaphorical language, what truths the biblical metaphors are expressing, he undermines his claim that these metaphors are necessary to communicate these truths. At the most he can direct our attention to the acts of God to which the biblical metaphors themselves refer. He succeeds in doing this in a way that is loyal to the authority of Scripture and attentive, though critically so, to the traditions of the Church. Gunton makes admirably clear the connection between epistemological and hermeneutical methodological problems and substantive theological issues. He explores deep theological questions with clarity, simplicity and

grace, reminding us of the wonder and mystery of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. *The Actuality of Atonement* is of value to anyone trying to think honestly and seriously about the Christian faith.

DONALD H. WACOME
THE KING'S COLLEGE

Dominion Theology: Blessing or Curse?, by H. Wayne House and Thomas Ice. Portland: Multnomah, 1988. Pp. 460. \$15.95. Cloth.

Dominion theology is a rapidly growing movement within the evangelical community. It offers an agenda that attracts those concerned with applying a Christian worldview to all of life, especially to economics, politics, and social concerns. In their well-researched critique, Wayne House and Thomas Ice expose the underlying beliefs of the system and offer a biblically based alternative. The major areas of conflict between Reconstructionists and the authors are theonomy, postmillennialism, and the agenda of the church. The authors argue from a dispensational stance.

In response to the theonomists' belief that the OT law should be the norm for both sanctification and civil governments, the authors contend that the Mosaic laws were valid as an external rule of life only during the period the Mosaic covenant was in effect and only with whom the covenant was made. From a battery of passages, they argue that the Mosaic law is a unit and that it has been completely fulfilled in Christ (pp. 89, 103-38). Thus, it would be equally wrong to impose this code upon Christians or upon society at large.

Some may question the authors' treatment of the *Locus Classicus* of Jesus' teaching on the law (Matt 5:17-20). Bahnsen views this passage as essential to establish that the Mosaic law is still in effect today. However, for the authors to argue that the fulfillment spoken of is prophetic rather than ethical could be debated, especially in light of the ethical teachings that permeate the Sermon on the Mount (cf. pp. 103-12).

House and Ice maintain that their view of the Mosaic law does not lead into antinomianism as some Reconstructionists contend. Rather the believer during the present age is under the law of Christ. All expressions of God's law reveal his character (p. 87). Although God's moral law never changes, its outward expression may vary (p. 261).

The authors recognize that Reconstructionists use "kingdom" in three senses: (1) it was definitely established in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, (2) it increases and advances progressively from that time to the end of the world, (3) it is fully established at Christ's second coming (p. 49). While acknowledging that some dispensationalists agree with Ladd's "already, not yet" approach to the kingdom, the authors assert that the Messianic kingdom is totally future (p. 220) and will come only with a cataclysmic intervention of Christ (p. 140). The present age is merely the preparation for the kingdom (p. 234). Christians are then not working in any way to further the kingdom on earth. The authors argue that Reconstructionist eschatology is the most important factor in determining the features of dominion

theology (p. 45) and that one cannot be a Reconstructionist without embracing postmillennialism (pp. 7-9). The primary weakness of postmillennialism, as the authors clearly point out, is that it lacks exegetical support (p. 307).

According to House and Ice, Reconstructionists believe that the covenant given to Adam to exercise dominion means that he was to establish the kingdom of God on earth (p. 31). The authors agree with the Reconstructionists that Gen 1:28-30 and 9:1-3 present a cultural mandate, that this mandate was given to all of humanity, and that it is still in force. Its purpose, however, is to enhance the effectiveness of the Great Commission (p. 159). They briefly note that some, such as Dave Hunt, interpret the dominion passages in terms of stewardship over creation, rather than extending Christian influence in society (p. 141). The authors also agree that "dominion" means to rule (p. 139) but reply that believers are to rule by humble service rather than by taking control (p. 50). Full implementation of a Biblical worldview in all areas of society cannot possibly be successful until the future kingdom (p. 140). The main problems are the depravity of man, the history of previous attempts, and the statements in Scripture that things will become progressively worse until the second coming.

The authors do not repudiate Christian social involvement but present a realistic picture in view of the depravity of man (pp. 242-43). "Our calling is not to Christianize the world, but to evangelize the world. . . . This will necessitate a certain degree of involvement in this world's system, yet with the knowledge that we will never be able to redeem society. The church is the model to the world of how things should be. It is a light upon a hill during the darkness of this current age" (pp. 342-43). The authors warn that the attempt to Christianize social institutions will distract the church from its primary calling of evangelism (p. 160). They charge Reconstructionists with eisegesis when they view the Great Commission as a restatement of the cultural mandate (pp. 150-51).

After pointing out numerous inconsistencies and questionable hermeneutics, the authors conclude that dominion theology "is just not taught in the Bible" (p. 335). Besides lacking biblical warrant, the authors repeatedly emphasize that this movement is in conflict with the mission of the church. This is a timely and significant book that deserves a wide circulation.

RICHARD A. YOUNG
TENNESSEE TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

The Eclipse of Christ in Eschatology: Toward a Christ-Centered Approach, by Adrio Konig. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989. Pp. 248. \$16.95. Paper.

Here is a book that attempts to cut through current eschatological emphases and concerns that are usually characterized by overstatement while lacking in truly biblical perspectives. Dr. Adrio Konig, Reformed Theologian and professor of systematic theology at the University of South Africa, has in this work produced a book (adapted from the Africans work, apparently by

König himself, from his *Jesus die Laeste*, 1980) which from the first forces a radical and very Scriptural shift in the mind of the reader from "last things" to "Jesus the end" (*telos*). It is König's contention (and he is surely correct) that Christians and, alas, Christian theology, almost invariably give the impression that eschatology refers to some series of things or events which lie somewhere ahead in the dim future. Rather, the entire history of Jesus is all fully and wholly eschatological; his birth in equal measure with his second coming. With the first advent of Christ the end (*telos*) has truly and fully come. Even those who acknowledge this very biblical perspective subsequently play this emphasis down by reverting to "last things" as if Jesus himself were not in fact the whole eschatology.

König's book, while containing five long chapters, is in fact in four parts. The first two chapters ("Christ and the End" and "Christ and Eschatology") are of great significance in bringing together the whole Christological nature of eschatology. Indeed, for König, Jesus is the end, the Kingdom, for in Jesus Christ God has actualized his Covenant goal with humanity and with creation, i.e., "I will be your God and you will be my people." In chapter three, König begins to unfold in detail the three ways in which Jesus Christ is—not will be but is—the End, the Last, the *eschaton*, as he had preliminarily set forth in chapters one and two. Herein, we see that "for us," and thus without us is that wholly on his own he deals with and overcomes our enmity with God in effecting justification (via incarnation/life, crucifixion and resurrection). In chapter four, König effectively sets forth how, in the "interim," Christ has and is accomplishing the covenant goal of God "in us" by the Holy Spirit. As Christ has (cf. the critical place of Christ's exorcisms) overcome the powers, he is Victor now, so by Christ's continued presence (his second coming at Pentecost, in a sense) in those who through faith (faith being in itself empty by made decisive by God's grace) in Jesus Christ are made participants in the covenant, in the Kingdom of God, now by the Holy Spirit. Yet this, unlike the "for us" aspect, includes the human element (again, the decisiveness of faith, faithfulness, etc.). In the final major chapter, König presents at length and, as always, with superb exegetical, biblical-historical insights, the third way, the conclusive and fulfilling way in which Jesus is fully the Last, the whole of eschatology. In this Jesus Christ accomplishes God's covenant goal to be our God and we to be his people "with us" at his second coming/advent (or third if one accounts his coming by the Spirit as the second). What was actual and realized but hidden/veiled is now fully disclosed, i.e., that Jesus is Lord. The way in which König relates this to the "signs of the times" (which occur in every generation) to the "imminency of Christ's return" (about which König is very strong) and other common eschatological subheadings is done in a way that must not be missed. His little conclusion (called "Instead of an Introduction") tells not only of other works that shall appear in this series arising from König's biblical, historical approach to theology, but is thought provoking as it clarifies the interrelations of the various headings of theology as they would arise out of this approach.

As is apparent already, this reviewer found this work on eschatology to be an excellent and critical word to the Church and current Christian theology

about the Christ-centered nature of eschatology. Konig's expression is almost always clear and insightful and above all, very biblical. He has effectively harnessed into a whole theological expression the exegetical-theological-methodological penetrations of such persons as Berkouwer, Ridderbos, von Rad, Barth, Pannenberg, W. Hendriksen, and so many more (German, Dutch, English and South African) scholars while serving, where necessary, critical notes to each in light of the biblical understanding of Christ the End.

Very little criticism of any depth can be raised against this work. Still Konig's critiques (mostly near the end of chapter three) of premillennialism ("chiliasm") and popular perspectives, while often good and to the point, seemed to always reflect older premillennial views, positions no thinking premillennarian now holds. He occasionally sets up "straw men" (he only cites Clarence Larkin, whose work has long been considered merely an interesting relic and never refers to George Eldon Ladd, who, though a premillennialist, would have little difference with Konig). There seemed to be times also where Konig would allow himself to do something eschatologically that he would not allow to other perspectives while using terms or language, which by their connotative baggage, are meant to cast a negative light upon a view. Also, a glossary or index of Scriptures and subjects discussed may have proved a helpful addition, though the table of contents is given in good outlined detail. Yet, the negative points mentioned above were quite minor, and Konig could be as critical to current amillennialism (basically Konig's view) as to premillennialism.

This is simply an excellent, stimulating work on eschatology that will surely lead every reader who studies it into a clearer, fuller realization of all the Christian is and has now and will have in Jesus Christ by whom alone God wills to be our God and we to be his people. Amen.

JOHN D. MORRISON
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

Eupraxophy, by Paul Kurtz. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1989. Pp. 159.

Eupraxophy is a call to action extended to all who share the humanistic view of reality, which is defined as one that views the universe as having a material explanation and is characterized by "order and regularity on the one hand and chaos and random fluctuations on the other" (p. 36). The author is Paul Kurtz, professor of philosophy at the State University of New York in Buffalo, editor of *Free Inquiry* magazine, founding chairman of the Committee of the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP), and co-president of the International Humanist and Ethical Union.

"Eupraxophy" is a word invented by Kurtz to describe the good life lived without religion. It comes from three Greek roots: eu, meaning good; praxis, meaning action; and sophia, meaning wisdom. A "eupraxopher" is a humanist who openly communicates his ideas as to how life ought to be lived. "Eupraxophy differs from antiseptically neutral philosophy in that it enters

consciously and forthrightly into the marketplace where ideas contend" (p. 17). He offers Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Russel, Dewey and others as examples of eupraxophers (pp. 31, 32).

Eupraxophy is five chapters in length. In chapter one Kurtz defines in detail his conception of "eupraxophy" and discusses the controversial issue of whether humanism should be considered a religion. In chapter two the proposition of humanism as a eupraxophy is discussed in four major principles: a method of inquiry, a cosmic world view; a life stance; and a social polity. Kurtz attempts to show why humanism should not be considered a religion in chapter three. Of course, this would be disastrous since it would bar humanism from the public school classroom (p. 9). Kurtz defines religion as "some belief in a divine or sacred reality and some binding relationship of worship or devotion to it" (p. 54). Thus he eliminates by definition humanism from consideration as a religion.

The fourth chapter addresses the inability of humanism to inspire individuals to action and offers some solutions. These solutions are to be found in the proper role of science, philosophy, and eupraxophy. The latter should take the findings of the former two and make practical applications that would impact society on the individual and community level. According to Kurtz inspiration should come from exciting new discoveries, higher standards of living, increased longevity, more leisure time, a humanized workplace, democratization and freedom, sexual freedom and enjoyment, global ethics in a global community, space exploration, creativity and new horizons yet untapped (pp. 120-24).

In the final chapter Kurtz elaborates on the changes that must occur for humanism to flourish and replace religion as the major force in people's lives. He believes critical intelligence must be promoted in the public educational arena, religion must be critiqued, and values must be taught to the next generation. Finally, eupraxophy centers should be developed which would basically replace the church. These would take the form of humanistic community centers providing a place for discussion, education, counseling, and celebration (pp. 148-52).

Eupraxophy is a well-written book. It is succinct and offers brief but valuable critiques of other religions. This book is highly recommended for believers who think it is important to know what "the other side" is thinking. Believers will find Kurtz's descriptions of religion in general and Christianity in particular quite distressing. Kurtz thinks religion is a bad thing, although in more charitable moments, he acknowledges that true humanists have respect for differing beliefs.

Eupraxophy is the third book of a trilogy, including *The Transcendental Temptation: A Critique of Religion and the Paranormal* and *Forbidden Fruit: The Ethics of Humanism*, all of which are designed to answer various criticisms leveled against humanism by theists.

Kurtz falls short in this volume in that he gives no reasonable basis for humanists to be compassionate and openminded toward those who would believe in a deity. He simply says they would. History would say otherwise. He gives no answers as to how humanists today would avoid the totalitarian results of atheistic states of the past. Kurtz simply says they were wrong. It

seems beyond his conception that our founders, who were so greatly influenced by religion, would produce such a free state. Perhaps Kurtz addresses these questions in the other two volumes of the trilogy.

MARK TOTTEN
NASHVILLE BIBLE COLLEGE

Portraits of Creation, by Howard J. Van Till, Robert E. Snow, John H. Stek, and Davis A. Young. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989. Pp. 285. \$14.95. Paper.

The writers are professors at Calvin College and Seminary (Van Till, Young, Stek) and Potsdam College, NY (Snow). They have been at the center of an ongoing controversy at Calvin over the teaching of theistic evolution. The school supports their evolutionary view, but the conservative Christian Reformed constituency has been greatly disappointed and disturbed. In this book the authors argue their case for accepting the modern scientific view of history, and rejecting a literal reading of Scripture. The book does not discuss organic evolution or the origin of mankind. Instead geology, astronomy, and theology are emphasized.

Davis Young begins with a plea that the long term "warfare metaphor" existing between Christianity and science be ended. He blames creation science in particular for much of the current Bible-science tension (p. 10). The recent creation view is given colorful descriptions throughout the book: astounding (p. 166), eccentric (p. 166), sect-like (p. 178), puzzling (p. 166), folk science (p. 201), and blind (p. 85). So much for the peace proposal! The "warfare" actually goes deeper than Young's description of a science/Christianity struggle—it is a spiritual battle.

Young summarizes his earlier works on earth history, *Creation and the Flood*, and *Christianity and the Age of the Earth*. The geology of the Colorado Plateau is discussed as a case study showing the earth's assumed antiquity. To emphasize that the creation week should not be taken literally, Young refers to Ps 93:1—[The earth] cannot be moved. However, Young fails to mention Ps 30:6, where David says that he will never be moved, using the same verb *môṭ*. This is clearly a figure of speech meaning stability and fidelity to God's chosen path. The burden is upon Young to prove that Genesis 1–2 are likewise filled with similar figures of speech instead of authentic history.

The critique of the creation science movement by Robert Snow is especially insightful. He concedes the value of creationist publications as a needed "protected environment" in which ideas that deviate from conventional professional science can be tried out and polished (p. 176). Snow attempts to categorize creationist writers into two camps: "modest" scientists and "immodest" dogmatists (p. 191). Unfortunately, Snow does not show familiarity with the healthy exchange of ideas and peer reviewing that has characterized creationist writing during the past ten years. The Creation movement has matured in scholarship, and its critics should recognize this fact.

Snow makes some surprising statements. He calls William Paley's *Natural Theology* "one of the greatest apologetic disasters in the history of Christian thought" (p. 21). This is strong condemnation of a classic work that was once required reading at Cambridge! Paley's liberal views should indeed be criticized, but his detailed design arguments still deserve careful study today. In a strained attempt to allow for evolutionary change, Snow claims that an explicit ex nihilo creation is not taught in the Old Testament (p. 50). One wonders how he handles Exod 20:11, Ps 33:9, etc.

Howard Van Till writes an astronomy chapter summarizing his previous, controversial *The Fourth Day*. He denies any "shred" of created appearance of age, stating that cosmic [big bang] history is authentic history (p. 107). This ties Van Till's biblical interpretation to a natural cosmology theory which is even now eroding. Big bang acceptance also forces Van Till to link inseparably vast cosmic distance with a vast time scale, perhaps one of the greatest sources of error and confusion in understanding the created universe.

Theologian John Stek writes about biblical origins. He thoroughly discusses usages of the Genesis words create (*bārāʾ*), form (*yāšar*) and make (*ʿasā*). In Scripture, God is never said to create (*bārāʾ*) from some prior existent material. However, Stek nonetheless concludes that *bārāʾ* allows for creation with preexisting materials because *ʿasā* does, thus siding with Snow in denying a supernatural, ex nihilo creation. This exegesis is questionable: can any words in Scripture that appear interchangeably be used to qualify and limit each other? The result would surely be chaos.

Stek believes that early Israelites could not have comprehended the abstract idea of ex nihilo creation (p. 221). On the basis of contemporary Old Testament miracles, however, early Israelites may well have understood the concept better than we do today! Stek concludes that Scripture promotes an incorrect view of science, based on ancient Near Eastern reflexes instead of on reality (p. 238). Genesis 1-2 is declared to be metaphorical, not authentic history (p. 237). In Stek's judgment, to take Genesis literally is to trivialize it. Sadly, this unsound conclusion to the book is inevitable. A complete accommodation to modern secular science leads to no other destination. Many Christians clearly see two basic flaws with this result of theistic evolution. First, how can secular science even begin to understand singular, supernatural events such as the creation week? Second, how can incomplete, imperfect science theories be the final interpreter of Scripture? For many Christians, *Portraits of Creation* does not give satisfying answers.

DON B. DEYOUNG
GRACE COLLEGE

American Catholic Biblical Scholarship: A History from the Early Republic to Vatican II, by Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989. Pp. 424. \$34.95. Cloth.

The second volume in the Society of Biblical Literature Confessional Perspective Series follows that of Mark Knoll's *Between Faith and Criticism*:

Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America. Fogarty, professor of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia, traces the emergence, condemnation, and then resurgence to a place of prominence of modern biblical criticism in the life of the Roman Catholic Church. Though centered in America, attitudes and policies emanating from Rome inevitably appear, giving the book an even larger perspective.

Moving from John Carroll's decree in 1808 that "*the Douay Bible is to be literally followed and copied*" (p. 3) to the instructions of the Pontifical Biblical Commission that were incorporated in the Vatican II document *Dei Verbum* in 1964, the book masterfully chronicles the vicissitudes of the "biblical movement" (i.e., biblical criticism and vernacular translations). Significant translations (Kenrick and Confraternity Edition), the work of Kenrick, Maas, Poels, Gigot and other Catholic scholars, and the development of the Catholic Biblical Association and the Catholic Biblical Quarterly are highlighted with critical insight but also dramatic narrative that make for stimulating reading. Certainly this is must reading for students of modern developments in the Roman Catholic Church.

In the course of the narrative, Fogarty also explores theological issues such as the relationship between inductive biblical research and theological dogma (as one has put it, between scholarly integrity and magisterial authority), between the historico-grammatico method of scripture interpretation and the traditional Catholic view of religious liberty, and—of most interest to readers of this journal—between biblical exegesis and the doctrines of revelation and inspiration.

Such readers will be disappointed as they watch Catholic scholarship liberate itself from scholasticism and Tridentine theological presuppositions, investing much of the great intellectual and material resources of the Church in biblical study, only to finish by embracing with the enthusiasm of a crusade the tenets of modern critical thought regarding the Bible and Scriptural revelation and inspiration. Thus Kenrick held to the traditional authorship of the Pentateuch and the New Testament books (p. 11) and opposed papal infallibility during Vatican Council I as a misinterpretation of Matt 16:18, noting that only 17 of 61 of the Church Fathers who commented on this verse saw it applying to Peter (p. 31). By 1961, the antagonism of the biblicists' chief adversaries (Archbishop Vagnozzi in the U.S. and the Cardinal Ottaviani in the Vatican) were best explained by the observation that they "honestly believed that the inspiration of each Pauline letter . . . was directly linked to its having been written by Paul himself" (p. 296). The New American Bible, which appeared in 1970, no longer held to the traditional authorship. Its explanatory notes embrace the documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch (pp. 347–48). Jesus himself "accommodated himself to the mentality of his listeners" (p. 334).

For those of Fogarty's persuasion there is an almost dramatic denouement to the book as Catholic modern criticism faces its opponents in the Vatican II deliberations. Fogarty sees two phases, with modern scholarship on the defensive as the Council is convened, then passing to the offensive and then triumphing in the final wording of *Dignitatis Humanae Personae* and *Dei Verbum*. The former espouses a new concept of religious freedom. It recognizes

that truth could be found outside the confines of the Catholic Church and conceives of religious freedom not in terms of Church-State relations but rather on a "theology of a person" that holds that only a free man can respond by faith to God's call. This means inquiry about God is only possible where there is religious freedom that allows individuals to seek the truth without having to comply to theological presuppositions. The second document holds that revelation is not a series of propositions but rather principally the word made flesh. (There is the immediate question, "What can we know about Christ if we don't have propositional truth?") Concerning the transmission of this revelation, "Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God" (p. 342). Revelation is thus transmitted in Tradition, whether it be enunciated in the Scriptures or by the Church. (It is natural to ask, "How does it happen that they contradict each other so often?")

In all this Fogarty notes the vindication of the thought of men like Murray Kenrick, Lagrange, and others. Perhaps the sentence that best expresses his sense of quiet triumph is found on p. 343: "In *Dei Verbum*, the Church officially espoused historical criticism and placed itself firmly in the mainstream of biblical scholarship." He goes on to cite the *Jerusalem Biblical Commentary* as a demonstration of maturity in American Catholic biblical scholarship and a noteworthy number of Catholic scholars who were elected president of the Society of Biblical Literature and other important societies and commissions, some of which were joint efforts with Protestants.

Fogarty does indicate that after Vatican II it was not always smooth sailing for biblical scholarship. He is happy with the new theological vision born out of Vatican II and concerned that his Church not return to a "time conditioned theology" (p. 350). Though final comments might have been anticlimactic, given the historical structure of this book, one wonders why there is no reference to the Extraordinary Synod of 1985 which seemed a major setback to many progressives. This would have balanced specific examples of the triumph of free enquiry and ecumenical cooperation cited by Fogarty. Such would have prepared his readers for more recent Vatican utterances on this subject. In October 1990, Cardinal Ratzinger, the most authoritative theologian in the Church of Rome, told a synod of bishops met in the Vatican that post-Vatican II Catholic theology had welcomed modern exegesis uncritically, taken by observers as an unveiled charge of protestant contamination in Catholic theological circles. One commentator wrote that Ratzinger "said 'no' to Modernism."

This book will help evangelicals, especially scholars, understand the tension within the Church and where they might lead. Of particular theological note is the relationship between Scripture and Tradition in the Vatican II position (pp. 339-44). An evangelical will find no encouragement in present trends, either because the "biblical movement" has embraced form criticism or because the Vatican II impulse is now being checked and even countered by authoritative utterances from Rome.

RONALD FISHER
MILAN, ITALY

The Puzzle of the Soviet Church: an Inside Look at Christianity and Glasnost, by Kent R. Hill. Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1989. Pp. 417.

Kent R. Hill, formerly associate professor of history at Seattle Pacific University and now director of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, is an acknowledged expert on religion in the Soviet Union. In this book he offers a hard-hitting, realistic account and analysis of the fortunes and misfortunes experienced by religious believers in the USSR from 1917 to the era of *glasnost* under Mikhail Gorbachev. This is not a systematic history such as Paul D. Steeves, *Keeping The Faiths* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1988), but rather an overtly interpretive, critical examination which exposes the atheism of the Soviet regime and the consequent sufferings various religious bodies have endured under its rule. Hill offers numerous case studies as supporting evidence, and he has documented his coverage extensively, although at points he has relied upon secondary sources for crucial information.

Although the Russian Orthodox Church occupies center stage in this book, the author has given due attention to the plight of Roman Catholics and Protestants as well, the latter being found in both registered and unregistered churches. Western observers of evangelical persuasion often extol the courage of the unregistered congregations while criticizing those which accept government regulation as collaborators. Hill shows clearly that this is a serious error, and that both groups have made mistakes injurious to Christianity as a whole in the Soviet Union. He likewise shows that some churchmen indeed have collaborated with Soviet authorities and thereby have given the Red regime a propaganda advantage in the non-communist world.

Perhaps the most significant portion of this book is the section entitled "Western Responses to Christians in the USSR." Here the author calmly, objectively, and without evident rancor, laments the readiness of ecumenical leaders in the West to accept the Soviets' claims about freedom in their country. With undeniable evidence, Hill shows how such churchmen in the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches have often ignored reports of persecution and patronized Russian religious leaders who have allowed their government to use them to deceive the outside world. Such behavior on the part of theological liberals should not surprise evangelical readers. Hill's criticism of Billy Graham, however, will excite some concern in conservative Christian circles.

Graham went to the USSR in 1982 against the advice of some prominent Christian leaders in America, and while there he enjoyed such hospitality that he returned believing that reports about persecution had been greatly exaggerated. He did not witness any persecution, so he concluded that there probably was none. Hill comments, "the mistakes made by Dr. Graham are compelling evidence not only that all of us are fallible, but that the Soviets have proven particularly adept at manipulating some of our best leaders" (p. 193).

Conditions for believers in the Soviet Union have improved considerably under *glasnost*, but Kent Hill advises his readers to temper enthusiasm with caution. Communist leaders have suspended oppression before as a tactic to

arouse patriot support for their regime, and, in Hill's opinion, Gorbachev is a pragmatist, not a liberal. Christians in that country are way about their future, and Western observers should be hesitant about hailing the dawn of a new age of freedom.

The Puzzle of the Soviet Church is a thoroughly interesting, timely book written in a generally lucid though somewhat redundant manner. The title should be *The Puzzle of the Church in the Soviet Union*, since "Soviet" and "Church" are antithetical terms and the former is an inappropriate adjective to describe the latter. Hill sometimes fails to observe the rule of grammar that nouns and pronouns must agree in number. He often refers to singular nouns such as "church," "council," and "congregation" as "they" rather than "it." He employs "impact" where he should use "influence" or "effect," and in this book "utilize" replaces "use" almost entirely. In other words, there is too much academic jargon in this work. Such criticisms are, however, small matters which do not impair the influence (not impact) of this helpful book. It would be a fine acquisition for church libraries.

JAMES EDWARD MCGOLDRICK
CEDARVILLE COLLEGE

The Christian Tradition: A History of Pre-Development of Doctrine, vol. 5 in *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture* (since 1700), by Jaroslav Pelikan. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989. Pp. 361. \$29.95.

The history of Christian doctrine has been, from the first century, a study in the interaction and challenge of tensions, religious, philosophical, cultural and political. The modern period is not only no exception but, in Pelikan's opinion (and rightly so), is probably the epoch most reflective of this since the first century. Here, with the fifth volume of his series on *The Christian Tradition* completed, Pelikan puts to rest a project of well over twenty years. It is a project to set forth cogently the central doctrines of the Christian faith as they are understood, believed, given development, etc., in the face of challenges large and small in a multitude of contexts.

The fifth and last volume is concerned to give clarity to a number of central (and related) emphases in Christian doctrine as set both in developmental continuity with the past and within the "battlefronts" of modern doubt, unbelief, relativism and antagonism of various types in modern culture. Pelikan illustrates the deep modern dilemma that the Church of Jesus Christ (Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant) has had to face by a kind of comparative literary reflection at the outset of the volume. As Augustine's *City of God* was the preeminent literary statement of the central themes in the patristic "triumph of theology," and Dante's *Divine Comedy* was the poetic embodiment of the medieval understanding of nature and grace, so the classic statement of the relations between "Christian doctrine and modern culture" is Goethe's *Faust*. Dr. Faust, after questioning fruitlessly for wisdom, finds that as with the other faculties of the medieval university (philosophy, medicine,

law) "Theology too" ("alas"), beautiful as is the object of such yearning, will not be effective for him. He says, "I hear the message all right; it is the faith that I lack." Faust then typifies the modern situation for Christian doctrine, unbelief.

Pelikan's concern that this volume be not a history of modern Theology (though prominent personages and their influence are obvious throughout) but of Christian doctrine. This meant that his choices for focus and discussion shifted, for example, from the Enlightenment in itself (rather than as influence) to Pietism, to the doctrinal interactions between the three major branches of Christendom, to issues of ecumenism, etc. Within and between these, the challenges of a new situation for the Church were encountered and met invariably with great difficulty. These efforts were only partially successful. But in fact, according to Pelikan's overall "message," Christian doctrine not only met the challenge, developed where necessary in continuity with past tradition, but advanced in the twentieth century (though not everyone would agree with Pelikan's assessment of "advance").

The sweep of Pelikan's discussion is obviously huge, but it is usually effective. With so many major "fronts" to cover, his method of analysis and exposition as reflected in the previous four volumes is a wonder. In a sense, Pelikan advances or makes haste slowly. Section by section, chapter by chapter, he moves forward in his discussion, then returns to see another critical framework of Christian doctrine as it faced powerful contextual challenges within the ongoing press of recent history. Pelikan thus seeks to see clearly and impartially the various segments of Christianity as they were and are in the face of often gigantic challenges. These may be both internal and increasingly external in such questions as Orthodoxy and the nature of dogma, the question of the essence of religion within historical manifestation (importantly as it relates to the uniqueness and centrality of Jesus), the new emphasis on the internal or "heart" emphasis (pneumatology) in Christian thought and apologetics, the renewed need to defend the entire Christian world-view (in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), the new awareness of the historical "mediation" of all truth (question of relativity of all "truth") and with it the recognition of the "development" of doctrine, and finally to twentieth century's focus on Ecclesiology and the "sobornost" or universality of the Church.

This work by Jaroslav Pelikan, much like the volumes that preceded, is outstanding in a number of respects. As noted, he tries to give perspective to a massive and turbulent context which, given the objective, effectively touches the major trends, concerns, obstacles and areas of growth in modern Christendom. Pelikan is especially sensitive to how changing cultural moods and ideas variously (but definitely) affect the church and all Christian thought by way of reaction, response or adjustment. Again, Pelikan usually takes great pains to be fair, as often reflecting *against* his own Lutheran tradition as for it. He works to bring out the pros and cons on the various sides of an issue, both within and without the Church. To be more exact, Pelikan does not speak disparagingly of the evangelical traditions or of orthodoxy, often highlighting its consistency and strengths against opponents. Along this line, this book is quite helpful in giving perspective to the place and role of evangelicalism in its various branches, including fundamentalism, within the larger context of the Christian faith and various confessional positions. Pelikan's "side"-notes (as

opposed to "end" or "foot"-notes) are again a most important part of this work. As the reader observes areas of particular interest, the primary sources are to the left (Pelikan also includes ninety pages of primary sources, editions and collections). The work is usually quite readable though there are occasional paragraphs which no matter how frequently they were re-read, never quite became clear. The connections between chapters and overall continuity are an important aspect of this book, and Pelikan has been very conscious of the need to build this into the exposition in order to bring the reader through and not into the critical contexts. Finally, it must be said that for all of his concern for fairness and critical "apartness," Pelikan is clearly enthusiastic about the topic.

There are, though, a few points of concern with the book. The "side"-notes give reference or source and are not only helpful for further research but are important for checking the identity of the spokesman for the faith. Questionable authorities for the Church are often given more than their disproportionate emphasis. For example, should the conclusions of a Semler be given a near lion's share for the assessment of church doctrine in the eighteenth century? In this way authorities, such as a Semler, are used by Pelikan as "mouthpieces" for his more "liberal" Lutheran theological perspective. Yet this is not a major concern within the whole of the text. Finally (and this is hardly a criticism in the truest sense), a taste will often be "whetted" for a topic only to have Pelikan, because of the limitations of space, leave it for the development of the discussion. But this is in fact probably the great strength of the book.

This final volume of the series *The Christian Tradition* must be, like the previous volumes, highly recommended. The few drawbacks do not keep this volume and this series from a deserved mark of excellence. Pelikan has done a service to the whole church in this mammoth undertaking and has helped and will yet help many to understand other traditions within the larger Christian tradition. As a textbook of church doctrine there can be few peers.

JOHN D. MORRISON
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith, by Marvin R. Wilson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Dayton: Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, 1989.

Words like "Judaism" and "Hebraic" have appeared in several titles from various publishers that traffic in the evangelical arena, especially the kinds of houses that attempt to target not only the layperson interested in serious study but also the seminary professor facing a textbook order form. This interest in Judaism has always been a part of evangelicalism in America, especially among interpreters who favor that undefined, unrestrained allegorical hermeneutic for the Old Testament. The interest in Judaism today, however, is becoming in a lesser form what the new age movement was to evangelical publishers two

or three years ago (when every press felt compelled to spin off its own definitive guidebook). *Our Father Abraham* falls into this revived appreciation for Jewishness.

The difficulty in summarizing the contents of this book stems from the fact that this is in some sense a handbook, or perhaps better yet three or four loosely related studies bound in one volume. The main parts of the book are (my paraphrasing): (Part 1) reasons why Christians should recognize their Jewish heritage; (Part 2) a historical survey of the relation between the church and the synagogue (from the time of Jesus right up to anti-semitism "From Luther to Present"); (Part 3) understanding Hebrew thought; and (Part 4) selected studies that apply an appreciation for Jewish heritage to the present-day church, examining issues such as marriage and family through Hebrew eyes, Passover and contemporary Christianity, and the Hebrew view of knowledge and teaching. Part 5, "Toward Restoring Jewish Roots," concludes the work.

Valuable explanations and arguments can be found within every part. The first part ("A New People: Abraham's Spiritual Children"; pp. 3-29) is perhaps what the church needs to hear most from the movement mentioned above, namely that if the church is "grafted into Israel" then in order to have a right relation with God each believer must look to the Old Testament as a primary source for faith and practice (see also p. 131). This message is not new with Wilson but for the most part he states it well. (There is, however, no excuse in this section for omitting a discussion of, or even a bare-bones introduction to, narrative theology, especially when it would only strengthen his case.) Part 2, the historical survey, may end up being set aside by many laypersons and conversely appreciated by students due to its coverage of Jewish-Gentile interaction in the first century, Jewish revolts, and anti-semitism in the church. All of Part 4 (the largest part, pp. 195-311) is worthy of print, though much more for the sake of laity than seminary students. The various topics will be fascinating to someone who is reading about Judaism for the first time. A summary and application of Passover, for instance, is quite well done for this kind of book. Passover traditions enjoy widespread interest among evangelicals today, and it was pleasantly surprising to find that Wilson avoided the temptation to examine the *seder* detail by detail, focusing instead on issues such as attitudes during the *seder* (pp. 250-52).

There is, however, something that is bothering about Part 1—Barr's position on the relation between word and concept is misrepresented by Wilson (pp. 6-7). Barr is dismissed here so that Wilson can talk of "Hebrew Thought" later ("The Contour of Hebrew Thought," pp. 135-62, one chapter within Part 3), and, lacking the resources of a time portal, such "thought" is, of course, for the most part recoverable only through the printed words of the Hebrew Bible. The reason that Wilson must reject Barr is most evident on pp. 136-37 and following, and it is this section within Part 3 that will receive either praise or commendation by Hebraists. Since Wilson encounter a living, sense-oriented (i.e., of the five senses), affectively powerful, *literature* within the pages of the Hebrew Bible, this must be a reflection of the *lifestyle* of the Hebrews. He says that "Laziness, inertia, or passivity were hardly marks of the

Hebrews' lifestyle" (p. 137). Things like this simply cannot be said with any authority, which was, of course, one of the points that Barr was making in *Semantics*. Many of Wilson's arguments can be used to say that, based upon current literature and pop music, English is a language above all others and that the American mindset is very "doing and feeling," with "few abstract terms." Pop music is very sense-oriented, and English in popular usage is comprised of many words which "originally expressed concrete or material things and movements or actions which struck the senses or started the emotions." If anyone doubts that English can easily lend itself to "word pictures," he or she should consult the book written on a popular level called *Language of Love*, by Trent and Smalley. It is the claim of Trent and Smalley that effective communicators in many fields use word pictures (words and expressions with meanings rooted in the five senses). Keeping in mind, of course, that it is the *effective* communicators that get published, one has to wonder whether God chose to inspire effective communication or simply, as Wilson seems to claim, the communication that all Hebrews were well versed in. It is interesting, for instance, that according to Wilson, "The world of the Hebrews was such that they had long periods of time for uninterrupted meditation" (p. 154). I don't think that Wilson intends to convey the impression that there were never any apathetic or lazy Hebrews, but many of his readers will interpret him to mean exactly this. I simply get the "feel" that Wilson is affirming the *culture* of the Hebrews as well as their doctrine, a controversial position. The point is not that Wilson is wrong, but that he has presented an unbalanced picture of what we can learn through literature. A *partial* glimpse into the mind of the Hebrew through their literature can be gained, but nowhere near the extent that Wilson claims. He has some good comments in sections such as "Block Logic," "Everything is Theological," and "A Different View of Time and History" (see pp. 150-62 for all three). More detailed errors creep in at times throughout Part 3. Biblical Hebrew, for instance, has three "tenses" (if they can be called that), not two (p. 145).

As with many books marketed by evangelical publishers, this one targets a "wide readership," both academic and lay (vx-xvi). It will likely find more favor in the church than in the classroom. The "handbook" nature of the work will appeal to readers within both settings, but this same nature means that a given reader in either context will study some sections and skip over others. Those who will profit most from this book will be pastors and certain kinds of seminary or college professors. With the exception of the chapter on Hebrew thought mentioned above (less than 30 pages in a book of 300), pastors will find the book worth its weight in gold in terms of incorporating its truths and concepts into preaching and discipleship. Professors who teach Old Testament but do not come from a Semitics background may also find this useful, though perhaps not as a textbook but as an aid for lectures and as a suggestion for further reading. Simply put, if educating Christians about their Jewish heritage is the goal of the book, it is well met. Professors, however, will want to exercise their own judgment as to its value as a seminary textbook.

RONALD L. GIESE, JR.
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

Salt and Light, edited by Augustus Cerillo, Jr. and Murray W. Dempster. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989. Pp. 175. \$11.95. Paper.

Salt and Light is an interesting and useful text. The editors have assembled essays written by proponents of four evangelical socio-political views—the evangelical radical left, liberalism, conservatism, and the fundamentalist new right—that clearly demonstrate the degree to which contemporary evangelicals are philosophically fragmented. In some cases these essays are reprints of previously published point/counterpoint discussions between individuals holding alternative views. In other instances, the editors have chosen essays summarizing key arguments of different camps and have juxtaposed these articles for the reader's convenience. The text also includes six appendices featuring additional pieces like "A Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern" and Jerry Falwell's "Ninety-Five Theses for the 1980s." This book is published with the Christian College Coalition as part of the Coalition's study guide series.

Cerillo and Dempster appropriately limit their own commentary, allowing the authors to speak for themselves. The editors' primary contributions are the probing study questions they developed and provided at the end of each section, and their brief afterword.

Cerillo and Dempster conclude by calling for an "intramural civility" among evangelical political conservatives, liberals, radicals, and new rightists. Both editors want evangelicals to identify a common social ethic accommodating political pluralism within a framework of biblical interpretation. From their point of view, evangelicalism's political mosaic is a strength, one that can serve the movement well in a pluralistic and ever-changing society.

Like so many recent texts reviewing contemporary religion and politics, this book illustrates the incredible impact of modernity (a period of time and a philosophy) upon the sociology, political thought, and even theology of American society in general and protestants and evangelicals in particular. The "pre-modern" nineteenth century American social experience evidencing a relative moral and cultural consensus has produced under the impact of modernity a twentieth century moral and cultural "dissensus." Particularly frightening is the fact that this dissensus reaches far beyond the surface diversity of national or ethnic heritage to a more important level of fundamental life values. American society is questioning its past, its future, its morality, its purpose.

Evangelicals trying not to be "of the world" are nevertheless "in the world" and have also been seriously affected by cultural dissensus. Evangelicals share certain doctrinal persuasions, but they no longer seem to be able to agree on a workable social and political platform. Evangelicals spend more time correcting each others' errors of logic than proclaiming the truth of Christ to a barren world, and they lose collective social and political strength, diluting their impact upon culture. Although Cerillo and Dempster have contributed a volume encouraging evangelicals to understand the virtues of pluralism, their text also serves to illustrate the frustrations of pluralism. Evangelicals need to reaffirm biblical truths in a despairing age.

REX M. ROGERS
THE KING'S COLLEGE

Marriage Counseling: A Christian Approach to Counseling Couples, by Everett L. Worthington, Jr. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1989. Pp. 379. \$21.95. Cloth.

Marriage Counseling, by Everett Worthington, is a practical resource for Christian counselors trained in the use of Scripture in counseling. Aiming to help pastors, pastoral counselors, and mental health professionals, Worthington draws from hundreds of sources on marriage therapy. Added to the insights gained from the experience of others in his own experience of counseling more than two hundred couples over a fifteen year period. Years of training and supervising other counselors dealing with hundreds of other couples have also helped to prepare this counsel for counselors. The reader is encouraged to divide counseling into the three distinct phases of assessment, intervention (counseling proper), and termination and to focus on the five key areas of intimacy, communication, conflict, hurt-blame-sin, and commitment. Opening with the need for trained marriage counselors (part 1) and a theory of marriage (part 2), the book develops a philosophy and possible procedures for assessment (part 3), intervention (part 4), and termination (part 5). An appendix surveying current theories of marriage counseling concludes the book.

The principal strength of the book lies in its practicality. Counselors are provided with specific questions, techniques, assignments, reports, case studies, goals, and verbatims along with rationales for evaluating the usability of each. Because the recommendations have been tested clinically, realistic expectations of success, problems to anticipate, pitfalls to avoid, and anticipated objections accompany the proposals. A second strength is the emphasis upon change in the behavior of the counselee and not just upon the acquisition of insight. Homework assigned to, and accomplished by, each counselee comprises an essential element of the model espoused. Thirdly, Worthington demonstrates a humble spirit, even though he is directive. He is quick to cite his own limitations and failures, along with the need to depend on the Lord. The work strikes a good balance between dependence on God and responsibility of men (on the part of both counselor and counselee). The author is willing to take firm Christian positions (e.g., opposing cohabitation, wife swapping, and abortion) while avoiding dogmatism concerning his recommendations. The reader is left with options in choosing techniques, including procedures not used or preferred by the author.

The book is weakest in its integration of Christian elements: the Bible, the church and Christian counselors. Very few Scripture passages are explicitly used in the interventions suggested, and it is not until the end of the book that Worthington explains that he has presupposed their inclusion. "Prayer with and for clients, Scripture study by clients about relevant topics, Scripture exegesis by the counselor, (perhaps) anointing with oil and the use of Scripture for exhortation are as much a part of counseling with Christian couples as are active listening skills, confrontation, clarification and interpretation. . . . The book presupposes that all are within the arsenal of the practicing Christian counselor" (p. 324). One can assume that Worthington uses ample amounts of these, but their absence leaves an unbalanced supply of procedures drawn from secular sources. The author himself allows that some readers might find certain

techniques incompatible with their understanding of Scripture. The material on forgiveness (see pp. 50, 51, 55, 58, 294) is especially weak. The stated intention of preparing this book as a resource for both secular and Christian schools probably explains this omission (see p. 11). His definition of a Christian seems to be broad (see pp. 155–56), and no evangelism of apparently unsaved counselees is suggested where it might be appropriate (see pp. 124, 126, 177–80, 289). Another omission is any suggestion of cooperating and coordinating with pastoral counselors during intervention and/or especially upon termination (see pp. 107, 174, 308). It is also hard to understand how church involvement could be omitted in evaluating a client's spiritual life (see p. 182). The interaction throughout the book is with predominantly secular, not Christian, sources. The appendix deals with only one Christian model (Norm Wright) along with numerous secular models. Overall the book interacts with relatively few Christian authors, with ninety percent or more of the 250 authors cited being secular.

Consequently, this book is most directly relevant for the mental health professional. Secular graduate schools might find it too Christian, and seminaries might find it too secular. However, Christian counselors who are well schooled in the use of the Bible in counseling will find this a helpful resource for clinical procedures, approaches, and techniques.

GEORGE M. HARTON
CAPITAL BIBLE SEMINARY

Sermon Analysis (The Pastor's Library Series), by Jay E. Adams. Denver: Accent Books, 1986. Pp. 224. n.p. Paper.

Most evangelicals, particularly pastors and leaders, have some familiarity with Jay Adams because of his extensive publications in the field of biblical counseling. As a result, and somewhat sadly, Adams is not as well known in his area of primary training: preaching. Frankly, until this reviewer encountered the Zondervan ("Jay Adams Library") editions of *Essays on Biblical Preaching* and *Preaching with Purpose* several years ago, I was "in the dark," also.

Now Adams, Professor of Advanced Ministry Studies at Westminster Seminary West in Escondido, California, has contributed a distinctive "self-help" homiletical tool. It is helpfully subtitled "A Preacher's Personal Improvement Textbook and Workbook." The only difficulty with that characterization is that the "textbook" portion is less than a tenth of the volume (pp. 13–28) while the workbook covers the rest (pp. 31–224). Thus it is, more accurately, a personal improvement workbook with introductory "tips"/instructions.

That quibble is not to take away from what can be a very significant aid to many preachers, especially: 1) those who learn best from reading; and 2) those who are convinced they should read and study sermons more widely than just our own era. Adams, although not providing the sheer bulk of sermonic material you would find in *Twenty Centuries of Great Preaching* or some such exhaustive (and, sometimes, exhausting) collection, has chosen some intriguing model messages. They range from two by St. John Chrysostom (349–407) to a

concluding pair by the contemporary Reformed expositor, Joel Nederhood of the Back to God Hour. The introductory comments on the life, ministry, and preaching style of each figure make that person come alive to a great extent. As a result, in many cases I almost felt I could see and hear the message being presented in its original dynamism.

Working with such an evaluative tool makes it possible not only to go "Walking with the Giants" (a la Warren Wiersbe) but also to "stand upon the shoulders of giants" in our preaching. Accordingly, Adams is to be commended for his innovation and encouragement for the average evangelical preacher to continually improve by studying and emulating the strengths of the great pulpiteers of church history (p. 10). However, much like learning to ride a bicycle with training wheels, it is still going to be a big step for each reader to go beyond the workbook to seek out more and more great sermons to study with Adams' method, as he envisions (pp. 21-23).

The book is marred by a few typographical or, possibly, factual errors. For example, in the "Suggested Sermon Analysis List" (p. 27), Augustine's date of death is listed as A.D. 397 (it is correctly given as 430 on p. 51). In the same list, Martyn Lloyd-Jones' name is spelled "Martin" (p. 28). A question related to the same list has to do with why John the Baptist would be listed with "Old Testament Preachers." Old *Covenant* preacher, maybe . . . but, last time I checked, the Gospels were in the New Testament.

One final observation: in a subtle stroke that keeps Adams' work clearly within the Reformed tradition, which is profiting from a renewed focus on preaching (e.g., S. Logan, ed., *The Preacher and Preaching* [Presbyterian and Reformed, 1986]), Nederhood is the *only* twentieth century preacher represented. Granted, Nederhood is a fine example, but many others could have been utilized with equal effectiveness (e.g., H. Robinson, *Biblical Sermons* [Baker, 1989]). Also, the selection of Nederhood, a polished radio speaker, seems to fly in the face of Adams' own pointed admonition to "confine your study largely . . . to the great preachers who preached weekly to a local congregation" (p. 10). How discouraging it can be for pastors with sixty-hour weekly ministry schedules to try to match the media stars whose only job description is "Preach!"

All in all, *Sermon Analysis* can be recommended as a helpful ministry tool. It is hoped that such works bode well for the final decade of the twentieth century to be a period of improved and powerful expository preaching by evangelicals, should the Lord tarry.

A. BOYD LUTER
TALBOT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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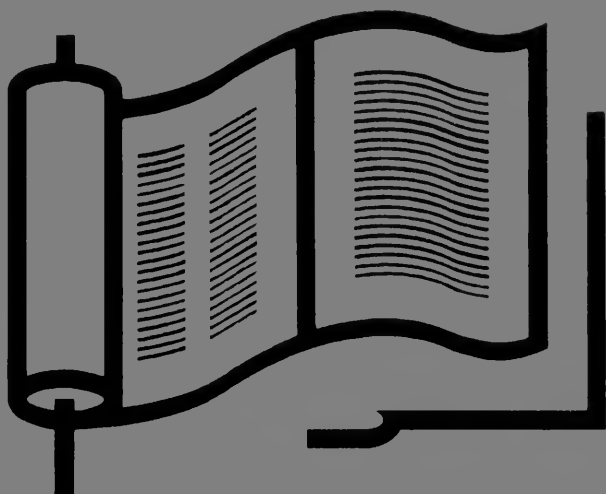
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MANAGING EDITOR'S NOTE

We wish to bring to the attention of our readers a mistake in the 11:1 (Spring 1990) issue of *GTJ*. Dr. Branson L. Woodard's name was spelled correctly on the title page of his contribution, "Death in Life: The Book of Jonah and Biblical Tragedy," but was misspelled as "Woodward" in the Table of Contents and in the headings on the pages of his article. Our apologies have been extended to Dr. Woodard, and we trust that persons making use of this article will note this correction.

It is again the privilege of the *Grace Theological Journal* to present to a wider public papers given at the annual meeting of the Dispensational Study Group. The 1990 gathering took place on November 15 on the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary campus in New Orleans, Louisiana. The topic for discussion was a most significant one, that of the literal interpretation of the Bible. Dr. Tremper Longman was invited to present a Reformed view of the issue and Dr. Elliott Johnson shared a Dispensational approach. Dr. Longman's response to Dr. Johnson is also included here.

Grace Theological Seminary and the *Grace Theological Journal* committee espouse a Dispensational approach to theology. In light of the larger purpose of an academic journal, it is our desire to present the current status of issues relevant to the development and articulation of this position. Thus it is with pleasure that *GTJ* publishes these papers.

At *GTJ* we are committed to getting back on schedule. Our next issue (12:1 Spring 1991) is currently being set and we hope to have it in the mail this summer, with another issue (12:2 Fall 1991) to come in the fall. We thank our subscribers for their patience and want them to know that careful watch is being kept in order that all subscriptions be fulfilled as requested. On your mailing label is a code which identifies the last issue of your subscription. For example, if your code reads EXP F91, your subscription runs through the Fall 1991 (12:2) issue, which, due to our schedule, will not be printed until 1992.

WHAT I MEAN BY HISTORICAL-GRAMMATICAL EXEGESIS— WHY I AM NOT A LITERALIST

TREMPER LONGMAN III

I would like to thank the Dispensational Study Group for their invitation to come and address it on the subject of historical-grammatical exegesis.¹ I especially would like to express my appreciation for the work of Elliott Johnson with whom I will be interacting, particularly for his new book *Expository Hermeneutics*² which I read in preparation for today's lecture.

To begin, I would like to expose my shortcomings in relationship to the topic I have been asked to address. I probably should have confessed them to Craig Blaising when he invited me to participate in the conference, but Vern Poythress had such a positive and enjoyable experience here last year that I could not resist the temptation.³

My confession is that I have a second-hand understanding of dispensationalism. Virtually all my colleagues at some point in their lives were dispensationalists, most notably Bruce Waltke. I have never been a dispensationalist, not even becoming aware of dispensationalism until seminary. Since I went to Westminster Theological Seminary you can imagine that I did not get an extremely positive assessment of it. Nonetheless, Clair Davis, our church historian, was always fond of saying that Dallas Theological Seminary was the closest seminary to us in many ways.

However, before I had heard the term "dispensationalism," I had read Hal Lindsey's *The Late, Great Planet Earth*⁴ in high school and had been deeply affected by it. I must admit that I now find significant hermeneutical problems with the book and certainly many of you do as well, but the book brought me face to face with apocalyptic literature in a way which started my inquiry into the claims of Christ. Lindsey

¹Since this article derives from an originally oral presentation, the style is casual and more personal.

²E. E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Zondervan, 1990).

³See the papers from this conference in the *Grace Theological Journal* 10 (1989).

⁴H. Lindsey, *The Late, Great Planet Earth* (Zondervan, 1970).

focused on apocalyptic in the Bible, and apocalyptic is meant to comfort oppressed believers with the thought of the judgment of the unbelieving oppressors. At the time that I read his book and was confronted by the vision of God's judgment, I knew that I was in the latter category.

I am dwelling on my distant relationship with dispensationalism because I have always been extremely uneasy to define and critique it as a system. I never felt that I really understood it. Now that I have read more extensively in the literature, I feel even more fearful to generalize about dispensationalism. There is a wide scope among you, and I get the feeling that there is some uncertainty and disagreement among dispensationalists about what defines dispensationalism.⁵ This ambiguity will most clearly affect the second part of my paper when I define and critique a "literal approach" to interpretation. If I create straw dogs, it is due to my ignorance not my malice.

My other confession is that, while dispensationalism focuses on eschatological issues and Revelation 20,⁶ I have very little interest in the debate. I have a great interest in the second coming obviously, but little interest in the issues surrounding millennial schemes (a-, post-, and pre-). I have sympathy for Berkhouer on this point when he suggests that we are asking the wrong question of the text.⁷ The Bible exhorts us to be ready for Christ to return at any moment. That is the attitude I try to inculcate in myself, unfortunately with great shortcomings.

My assignment is to describe what I mean by "historical-grammatical exegesis" and secondly how that differs from literal interpretation.

HISTORICAL-GRAMMATICAL EXEGESIS

I would like to start with a statement concerning the goal of exegesis before moving on to the method which I employ to achieve that goal. When I interpret a text of Scripture, my goal is to understand the passage or book in its Old Testament context and from that understanding to bridge the gap to my situation today.⁸ In my mind,

⁵For a recent statement of dispensationalist and literalist hermeneutics, see selected articles in J. S. Feinberg (ed.), *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments* (Crossway Books, 1988).

⁶See J. F. Walvoord's remark that "the passage remains a bulwark of premillennial interpretation" in "The Theological Significance in Revelation 20:1-6," in *Essays in Honor of J. Dwight Pentecost* (ed. by S. D. Toussaint and C. H. Dyer; Moody, 1986) 237-38.

⁷G. C. Berkhouer, *The Return of Christ* (Eerdmans, 1972).

⁸A. C. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description* (Eerdmans, 1980).

exegesis always includes application,⁹ but we can still unpack the goal of exegesis under two subheadings which are divided for the purpose of discussion: that is, the text's impact on the original recipients and then its application to us today.

HEARING THE OLD TESTAMENT AS THE ORIGINAL AUDIENCE

Distanciation

Divine revelation was addressed primarily to its first audience using the language, literary forms and conventions, metaphors, and genres which were familiar to that audience's culture. Thus, it is necessary for us as twentieth century Western Christians to first of all distance ourselves from our contemporary vantage point. In regard to the Old Testament, I conceptualize this distance on a number of levels including:

1. Time: the Old Testament was written thousands of years ago. Since many of us grew up with the Bible, we forget this simple, yet significant fact, even if we are scholars.
2. Culture: the Old Testament originated in an ancient Near Eastern, not a Western culture. Thus, we must do our best to distance ourselves from our own culture and place ourselves in ancient culture. Cultural distanciation is, of course, impossible to do totally. We are enmeshed in our culture and can never completely get out of it. Furthermore, there is much that we don't know about ancient culture. Thus, we are unable fully to reconstruct the ancient world in our imaginations.

This cultural distance has a tremendous impact on the task of exegesis. One brief illustration must suffice. Among other passages, Psalm 23 presents a picture image of God as a shepherd. If the interpreter of this psalm should stay in the twentieth century to understand this metaphor, he or she would seriously distort the meaning of the passage. Ancient sources must be consulted as available to arrive at a proper interpretation. Such a study of the shepherd image in ancient literature would lead to the discovery that the image has royal overtones. The ancient Mesopotamian king was known as the shepherd of his people. Below we will discuss the role of ancient Near Eastern materials in the interpretive task.

⁹Or as J. M. Frame would have it there is no distinction between meaning and application, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987) 83-84, 97-98, 140.

3. Redemptive-history: we live in the period of time after Jesus Christ has come to earth and performed his great redemptive acts. The Old Testament anticipates his coming in ways which we will discuss later, but nonetheless, we as Christians are distanced from the Old Testament due to our more intimate knowledge of Jesus Christ. For example, the sacrificial system does not have the same impact on us today as it did to its original audience in the wilderness.

Authorial Intention

By distancing ourselves from twentieth-century Western Christianity, we seek to understand the author's intention in the text of Scripture which we are reading.

By making the author's intention the goal of our interpretation raises a number of very thorny theoretical issues in the light of contemporary literary theory.¹⁰ However, I believe it is proper and possible, indeed necessary, to speak of the author's intention as long as we keep in mind three important points. First of all, our only access to an author is through his text. Even if we had access to the author in an extra-textual way (for instance, by means of personal interview), it still would not be legitimate to use that source in a privileged way. That is, if we asked an author what he meant by a certain passage and he responded, he could be wrong in a number of ways, for instance by changing his mind, distorting his words or (the one that I feel the most as an author) forgetting what he was trying to say! We can only get to the author's intention through the text, thus on a very practical level we will have a text-oriented exegesis.

This leads to my second point. When we arrive at an interpretation and attribute it to the author's intention, we have constructed a hypothesis, no more and no less. Thus, I feel comfortable with more nuanced statements of authorial intention than those provided by Hirsch,¹¹ a writer popular with some evangelical hermeneuts.¹² For instance, I gravitate to statements such as those provided by G. Strickland, who considers himself a disciple of Hirsch. In his *Structuralism or Criticism?* he cogently argues that "all that we say or think about a particular utterance or piece of writing presupposes an assumption on our part, correct or otherwise, concerning the intention of the speaker or writer."¹³ Thus, one partial way of stating the goal of historical-

¹⁰T. Longman III, *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation* (Zondervan, 1987) 63-71.

¹¹E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), and *The Aims of Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

¹²W. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), and E. E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*.

¹³G. Strickland, *Structuralism or Criticism? Thoughts on How We Read* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 36.

grammatical approach is to say that it is to recover the intention of the author of the passage. We have seen how this leads to a primarily text-oriented method.

However there is a third and even more difficult issue in making authorial intention the goal of exegesis and that is the nature of the author in the biblical text.¹⁴ The relationship between the author and the Author is a problem unique to biblical hermeneutics. When we talk about the intention of the author, what are we saying of the relationship between the divine and human authors? Are we asking after the human author's intention assuming that it is co-extensive with the divine author's? 1 Pet 1:10–12 and the interpretation of Old Testament passages in the New Testament led me to say no. However, do we then bypass the human author? No. The fact that the divine Author stands behind all of Scripture (written by an unknown number of human authors) in the final analysis gives us confidence to treat the Bible as an organic unity. It allows us to perform canonical exegesis which is based on the principle of the analogy of Scripture (more later).

Genre

In a text-oriented approach to authorial intention genre assumes an important, even critical place. Hirsch points this out in his discussion of intrinsic genres.¹⁵ This is because authors evoke reading strategies in their audience by utilizing certain generic forms. In other words, authors send signals to their readers as to "how to take" their statements.¹⁶

Genres are not forms which have dropped from heaven; they are cultural conventions which writers consciously or unconsciously exploit based on their own previous reading experience. In my "spare time" I've been writing a historical fiction based in the neo-Babylonian period. In the process I'm learning about literature. While I've been sketching out the settings, plots and character I've also been reading a lot of other historical fictions (*Ancient Evenings*; *Name of the Rose*; *The First Man in Rome*; *The Persian Boy*; *Pillars of Fire*)¹⁷ to get a feel for the genre. I don't feel totally restricted by what I read, but I do feel guided by them because authors learn what their audience expects. If they have a message to communicate or a story to tell, they want to do so in a form which is recognizable by their readers. In major part, this

¹⁴V. Poythress, "Divine Meaning in Scripture," *WTJ* 48 (1986) 241–77.

¹⁵Hirsch, *Validity*.

¹⁶T. Longman III, "Form Criticism, Recent Developments in Genre Theory and the Evangelical," *WTJ* 47 (1985) 46–67.

¹⁷N. Mailer, *Ancient Evenings* (Little, Brown, 1983); C. McCullough, *The First Man in Rome* (Morrow, 1990); M. Renault, *The Persian Boy* (Vintage Books, 1972); K. Follett, *The Pillars of the Earth* (Signet, 1990).

recognizable form is genre. Genre, as its very name implies is a generalization, an abstraction, within which variation does occur.

Thus, as I am engaged in an historical-grammatical study of a passage or book of Scripture I am concerned to identify the text's genre as early as possible. Of course, as genre theorists are quick to point out, this may only be done during the reading process, so a number of other things which we commonly associate with serious exegesis are also taking place at this time, for instance text criticism and word studies based on the most current linguistic insights such as those provided by Moises Silva in his book *Words and Their Meaning* and also his *God, Language, and Scripture*.¹⁸

Indeed a generic analysis of a biblical passage is done very much in a give and take with the biblical text. We must be careful not to impose a generic identification based on our theological prejudices, though on the other hand tradition can guide us and we should only depart from it with very strong evidence.

The Song of Songs is an excellent example from church history of how a community-wide shift in genre identification actually persuaded the vast majority of the church.¹⁹ Most people today identify the Song as some sort of love poetry. It may be a drama²⁰ or, I think better, a love psalter,²¹ but most today take it as love poetry. When the average Christian with some typical church instruction picks up the Song, he or she often expects to learn about the intimacy of human love.²² If such a thought became public in Victorian England, such a person would get hard looks, in Calvin's Geneva, would have been exiled and worse in Inquisition Spain.²³ The well-known shift in genre identification came about for two reasons: the bankruptcy of allegorical interpretation and more immediately the discovery of love poems in Arabia, from ancient Egypt²⁴ and Mesopotamia.²⁵

Now much more could be said about genre, but allow me a couple of further comments in order to anticipate objections. The first problem arises because the importance of genre identification in biblical studies initially assumed notoriety with the rise of form criticism.²⁶

¹⁸M. Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning* (Zondervan, 1983), and *God, Language and Scripture* (Zondervan, 1990).

¹⁹M. Pope, *Song of Songs* (AB; Doubleday, 1977) 34-229.

²⁰C. Seerveld, *The Greatest Song* (Trinity Pennyshare Press, 1967).

²¹M. Falk, *Love Lyrics from the Bible* (Almond, 1982).

²²S. C. Glickman, *A Song for Lovers* (IVP, 1976).

²³Pope, *Song*, 89-229.

²⁴J. White, *A Study of the Language of Love in the Song of Songs and Egyptian Love Poetry* (Scholars, 1978).

²⁵J. Westenholz, "Help for Rejected Suitors: The Old Akkadian Love Incantation MAD V 8," *Or* 46 (1977) 198-219.

²⁶A good primer on form criticism is J. H. Hayes (ed.), *Old Testament Form Criticism* (Trinity University Press, 1977).

Thus, people like myself who have pushed the importance of genre analysis have occasionally been accused of being closet form critics. Indeed one person wrote an article reviewing my work entitled "Form Criticism or the Reformed Faith?"²⁷ making an alternative for the reader between my approach and Reformed theology. My approach to genre is synchronic not diachronic, it is descriptive, not prescriptive.²⁸

The second issue is related to the first and that is the fact that faulty genre analyses seriously distort biblical interpretation. To identify Genesis 1 as "myth" or Genesis 32 as "Sage" or the book of Daniel as "pseudonymous writing" seriously affects our biblical interpretation.

While these are legitimate concerns, we must not throw out the baby with the bath water. The truth of the matter is, we can't read anything without making a genre identification. In our everyday reading of newspapers, novels, textbooks, short stories and countless other types of literature, this identification may be either conscious or unconscious. However, it is important that we as biblical scholars work consciously with our subject material. This is especially important that we do so because we are often distanced from the ancient genres of the Bible. This fact leads me to my next general topic: the comparative approach.

Comparative Studies

While engaged in a historical-grammatical study, I am thus interested in the message which the author intended to communicate to his audience. In the first place the message is directed toward the original audience which was contemporary with the author. Thus, it is incumbent upon me as a twentieth-century Christian to put myself back into the position of the original audience. This is the distancing to which I referred in the first part of the paper. How do we do that? How do we recreate the mindset of the original audience?

We begin on the basis of the analogy of Scripture. We immerse ourselves in the Bible and its worldview. We use the clearer parts of the Bible to help us understand the more difficult parts.

But today we can go further. Thanks to the discoveries of the past century and a half in particular we have more material now than ever before in the history of exegesis to help us recover the cultural milieu of the biblical world.

Now I am aware of the debate and of the problems here.²⁹ In the first place there is anything but cultural continuity between ancient

²⁷H. P. Smith, "Form Criticism and Reformed Theology," *The Trinity Review* 58 (1987) 1-3.

²⁸T. Longman, "Form Criticism."

²⁹See chap. 2 in T. Longman III, *Fictional Akkadian Autobiography* (Eisenbrauns, 1991).

Israel and the surrounding nations. On one level there is absolute contrast—true religion versus idolatry. Israel was called upon to abhor the religious systems of ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Canaan.

However on another level there is cultural continuity which can be exploited toward the recovery of the mindset and perceptions of the original recipients of divine revelation and this in a number of different areas.

On the simplest level, consider the language of the Old Testament. There is linguistic continuity between Hebrew on the one hand and, in a descending level of similarity, Ugaritic, Eblaite, Northwest Semitic, Akkadian, and Arabic.

Unless trained as an Old Testament scholar, people don't realize how much our English Translations depend on the comparative method. One small, but well-known, example is the light that the materials from Ugarit and Nuzi threw on the meaning of the word "judge" (*šôpēt*). It had long been considered an anomaly that the Judges did very little judging in the legal sense. It thus struck a chord when the Ugarit and Nuzi cognate indicated that the word could have a more general meaning of "to rule."

Hebrew lexicography has always been highly dependent on the comparative method, before the nineteenth century the only difference was that our resources were limited to Midrashic Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic.³⁰

The relationship between Hebrew and the other Semitic languages is paradigmatic to the other levels of the comparative approach as well. For instance, it is not at all surprising that there is continuity between a general Semitic poetics and biblical poetics. We are helped in our study of parallelism, acrostics and other poetic devices by recourse to Ugaritic and Akkadian poetry. W. G. E. Watson's study illustrates the point beautifully.³¹

However, it appears that as we move to other more substantive levels of comparative analysis, some evangelicals begin to balk. It is all right to speak of language and parallelism having light to throw on the Bible but what of metaphors and images for God? Without developing it here, there is an important relationship, in the final analysis a polemical one, between the image of Yahweh as the divine warrior who rides a storm cloud into battle and Baal who is also pictured in the Ugaritic materials as a cloud rider.³²

³⁰P. Fronzaroli (ed.), *Studies on Semitic Lexicography* (Universita di Firenze, 1973).

³¹W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (Sheffield, 1984).

³²T. Longman III, "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif," *WTJ* 44 (1982) 290-307, and S. Kang, *Divine War in the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East* (De Gruyter, 1989).

For the purpose of this paper, however, I would prefer to settle for a moment on the question of comparative genre, since this is an area in which Professor Johnson has criticized my work in his book *Expository Hermeneutics*.³³ It is true that Professor Johnson does not reject the use of comparative studies in genre analysis in principle because elsewhere he rightfully accepts such studies as those of Mendenhall and Kline which suggest that certain covenant passages bear a close relationship with Near Eastern treaties.³⁴ I simply submit that my study of Ecclesiastes shows a similar type of generic relationship with the genre of didactic autobiography.³⁵ Reading between the lines, I wonder whether Johnson and others are concerned about this genre identification because of the implications it has for the supposed Solomonic authorship of the book. However, it does not take the Akkadian genre to argue for this, the text itself gives us signals that Qohelet is not Solomon, as scholars like Martin Luther, Moses Stuart, Hengstenberg, Delitisch, E. J. Young, and D. Kidner have pointed out, and in any case Qohelet himself is not presented as the author of the book, but rather the second wise man who speaks to his son in the all-important epilogue.³⁶

But I shouldn't lose sight of the forest for the trees. My point is that comparative studies are an integral part of my practice of the historical-grammatical approach because it helps us recover the perspective of the original audience.

Furthermore, I believe that the comparative approach enables us not only to rediscover the meanings of words, the impact of poetic conventions, metaphors, and genres, but it also enlightens us to a major function of the biblical text in its original setting and that is its polemics against the surrounding religions which continually threatened Israel. Psalm 29 is a good example. This psalm, though probably not an originally Canaanite psalm as Cross³⁷ and others have argued,³⁸ does present a picture of God as the force behind the storm cloud. He is also pictured as the victor who is enthroned over the chaotic waters of the flood. Why has the biblical author presented us with this picture of Yahweh in colors very like Baal? For polemical purposes, the ancient reader of this psalm would come away with the

³³E. E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*, 277ff.

³⁴M. Kline, *Treaty of the Great King. The Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy* (Eerdmans, 1963), and G. E. Mendenhall, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *BA* 17 (1954) 50-70.

³⁵Longman, *Fictional Akkadian Autobiography*, 120-23.

³⁶M. V. Fox, "Frame Narrative and Composition in the Book of Qohelet," *HUCA* 48 (1977) 83-106.

³⁷F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge, 1973).

³⁸C. Kloos, *Yhwh's Combat with the Sea* (Brill, 1986).

message "Yahweh, not Baal, is the power behind the storm, he is the one who brings order out of chaos!"³⁹

LITERARY APPROACH

I would argue that the literary approach to biblical interpretation is also an aspect of the historical-grammatical approach to a biblical text.⁴⁰ We have already raised some issues related to a literary approach to the text as we were discussing issues surrounding the author as well as the concept of genre. Under this heading, however, I am interested in the conventions of the poets and storytellers of ancient Israel.⁴¹ Knowledge of these conventions is a way of placing ourselves back into the time period of the original audience. As Robert Alter has taught us:

every culture, even every era in a particular culture, develops distinctive and sometimes intricate codes for telling its stories, involving everything from narrative point of view, procedures of description and characterization, the management of dialogue, to the ordering of time and the organization of plot.⁴²

The more we become aware of these conventions, the better we will understand the poems and stories of the Old and New Testaments. To take a single example, if Kugel⁴³ is right that the poets of the Old Testament wrote parallelism so that the second colon always sharpens, intensifies, seconds the first colon, then as readers we have improved on our reading under the old paradigm that the second colon merely repeats the same thought as the first colon only using different words.⁴⁴

It is in this way that the literary approach is an aspect of the historical-grammatical approach. However, when the literary approach takes over the whole exegetical enterprise and denies the historical referentiality of the text we once again have an example of an excessive use of a method which results in a serious distortion of the text.

APPLICATION OF THE TEXT

As Christians, however, we may not stop with an analysis of how the first readers initially understood the text. This is especially true of the Old Testament. The historical-grammatical method insists on

³⁹T. Longman III, *How to Read the Psalms* (InterVarsity, 1988) 118-21.

⁴⁰L. Ryken, *How to Read the Bible as Literature* (Zondervan, 1984) 12.

⁴¹Longman, *Literary Approaches*.

⁴²R. Alter, "A Response to Critics," *JSOT* 27 (1983) 113-17.

⁴³J. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry* (Yale University Press, 1981).

⁴⁴Longman, *How to Read*, 89-110.

understanding the passage in its ever-expanding context and that context now includes the New Testament. We are drawn to consider the Old Testament from the perspective of the New Testament⁴⁵ at the insistence of Jesus himself in Luke 24:27, 44.

Thus, in terms of the Old Testament we must look at it in the light of Christ. Otherwise we are no different from rabbis. The approach to the relationship between the Testaments that I find most helpful are studies of themes which reverberate throughout the Old and into the New Testaments. I am thinking of studies like Robertson⁴⁶ and McComiskey⁴⁷ on covenant, W. Kaiser on promise,⁴⁸ E. Martens on God's design,⁴⁹ M. Kline⁵⁰ on theophany and many, many others. This kind of study finds its stimulus in such works as G. Vos⁵¹ and more recently but in basically the same vein, VanGemenen.⁵²

Even further, however, as an interpreter I can never read the text in order to dissect it as a scientist. I cannot even pretend to read it objectively as if I have nothing to do with it. Indeed, I must subject myself to the text and constantly ask the question what is it calling on me to do. I consider this kind of application question to be integrally involved with all interpretation and my interpretation is incomplete without it. As a matter of fact, and I should have said this first and not last, an important component of the historical-grammatical approach is prayer. I need to ask the Spirit to allow me to see the truth which God is trying to communicate to me through the pages of his Holy Word, and without such spiritual illumination, I can hope for no success in really understanding his word. This, of course, is the burden of 1 Cor 2:10-15.

CONCLUSION

The above is what I mean by the historical-grammatical method. If there were time and interest I would describe the importance of establishing the text by means of a text critical analysis, the need for careful philological analysis based on a competence in ancient Near Eastern languages, the need for a sensitive study of the composition of the book and a kind of analysis which looks for its theological *Tendenz*.

⁴⁵W. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Baker, 1981) 111.

⁴⁶O. P. Robertson, *Christ of the Covenants* (Baker, 1980).

⁴⁷T. McComiskey, *The Covenants of Promise* (Baker, 1985).

⁴⁸W. Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Zondervan, 1978).

⁴⁹E. Martens, *God's Design* (Baker, 1981).

⁵⁰M. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue* (privately published, n.d.).

⁵¹G. Vos, *Biblical Theology* (Eerdmans, 1948 [1975]).

⁵²W. VanGemenen, *Progress of Redemption* (Zondervan, 1988).

What I have described is the need to found the goal of our interpretation in a bridging of the horizons, to use Thistleton's phrase.⁵³ The need to first of all ask after the impact of a passage in its original context. This includes a study of genre, a close reading based on a literary approach and often involves a comparative study. In the second place, it involves a biblical-theological analysis which asks how this passage anticipates Christ and then examines our own lives, our society, our church's situation in the light of the demands of the passage. All of this needs to be surrounded by prayer which submits ourselves before the Lord of the Word as we study his Word.

HOW THIS DIFFERS FROM A LITERAL APPROACH

I have been asked to contrast this approach with the so-called literal approach, presumably because a distinctive trait of dispensationalism is a literal approach to the text. However, I do not believe that my approach to the text differs from a literal approach when the term "literal" is properly understood. That is, the approach to interpretation which I presented above does not conflict with literal when understood as "the type of interpretation where one reads passages as organic wholes and tries to understand what each passage expresses against the background of the original human author and the original situation."⁵⁴ However, it does conflict with what Poythress calls "plain" or "flat" interpretation.⁵⁵ Plain or flat interpretation takes a passage at its most obvious meaning and is hesitant to move beyond that reading. My approach also differs with the so-called "literal" approach if the latter restricts itself just to the Old Testament setting and does not take seriously the fact that the New Testament is an organic development of the Old Testament with the result that it often throws light on an Old Testament text (see below).

When I think of literal approaches (in the negative sense of the term) to the text, I don't think of a method as much as a mindset. On one level the question is, what do we expect to encounter in the text?

I doubt that there is anyone in this room who denies the presence of figures of speech in the text. Indeed, that is a part of a literal approach to treat as metaphor what is metaphoric.

However, what I encounter in the writings of some scholars who advocate a literal approach is the view that the burden of proof is on the metaphor. In other words, a passage, phrase, word or concept is literal until proven guilty. To be fair I readily admit that this charge stems from a perception but I think one of the purposes of this session

⁵³Thistleton, *The Two Horizons*.

⁵⁴Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*, 84.

⁵⁵V. Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalists* (Zondervan, 1987) 78-86.

is to get perceptions out in the open. My impression is that a literal approach believes that a figure of speech is something which can't be processed literally. In other words, the first move is to take it literally. If that is impossible, then it is figurative.

Blaising, a dispensationist, faults the literal approach in this regard when he says:

Another factor that perhaps has contributed to this fixed-interpretation view of dispensationalism has been the dispensational description of its literal hermeneutic as clear, plain, or normal interpretation. This can give the idea that all the hermeneutical results presented in dispensational expositions are the clear, plain, simple, obvious interpretations of Scripture. Any other exposition is unclear, convoluted, and abnormal.⁵⁶

Over against this dispensationalist view of the text as plain and simple stands the highly subtle and sophisticated rhetorical strategies of the biblical text. The insights of the new literary approach to the Bible work against such an understanding of the text.⁵⁷ It has long been recognized that poetry, prophecy, and apocalyptic are rich in imagery and subtle literary devices, but now more than ever the highly structured and incredibly detailed literary artistry of prose has also been recognized. Just to name a few examples, we note the discovery of the chiasmic arrangement of the flood narrative⁵⁸ and the incredibly detailed structure of the Babel story.⁵⁹ Alter⁶⁰ has described the function of type scenes and other prose conventions. Dillard⁶¹ has shown the power of the Chronicler's use of analogy and modeling in his historical reporting.

Our attention will later be given to the other more nuanced genres like poetry, prophecy and apocalyptic, but it is still valuable to point out the fact that the literary approach uncovers and describes the incredible subtlety of the Bible as a whole.

Surprisingly the Bible's literary artistry does not deny the clarity of the central message of the Bible. The Bible is a marvelous book; it communicates the gospel clearly to the least educated, while at the same time those of us who have spent our life studying the Bible feel that we are just scratching the surface. We never feel like we can control the text.

⁵⁶C. Blaising, "Development of Dispensationalism by Dispensationalists," *BibSac* 145 (1988) 257.

⁵⁷Longman, *Literary Approaches*.

⁵⁸G. J. Wenham, "The Coherence of the Flood Narrative," *VT* 28 (1978) 337ff.

⁵⁹J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1975).

⁶⁰Alter, *The Art*, 47-62.

⁶¹R. B. Dillard, "The Literary Structure of the Chronicler's Solomon Narrative," *JSOT* 30 (1984) 85-93.

I must admit, though, that in reading some writers, and they are most often of the literal school, they communicate the impression that they can control the text. I believe that this is what Blaising is getting at when he criticizes the "fixed interpretation view of dispensationalism." I also suspect such a sentiment when scientific or legal analogies are to describe the hermeneutic certainty, a good example being Johnson.⁶² Yes, I believe there are controls on interpretation (genre analysis is a good example), but not one which allows us to say that I have arrived at a definitive, exhaustive understanding of the text which we can then prove to everyone beyond a shadow of a doubt. The lack of such hermeneutical certainty invites us to be open to challenge in our exegetical conclusions.

While the entire Bible invites a literary approach and an expectation of sophisticated literary strategies, there is increased expectation of such in certain genres. In certain genres I not only expect discrete metaphors, but a metaphorical form of discourse. The poetic form of prophecy and especially apocalyptic point in that direction. Consider Num 12:6-8:

When a prophet of the Lord is among you,
 I reveal myself to him in visions,
 I speak to him in dreams.
 But this is not true of my servant Moses;
 he is faithful in all my house,
 With him I speak face to face.
 clearly and not in riddles;
 he sees the form of the Lord.
 Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"

If nothing else, doesn't this lead us to expect what indeed we find in the main among the prophets and apocalyptic seers, namely difficult to interpret, highly metaphoric language? We do not encounter obvious and easy to understand language.

The poetic form of most prophecy and apocalyptic cuts down on precision, but then that is not the function of the text. As we read Ezekiel 40-48, we ask ourselves whether it describes a literal temple, or is what we read a metaphor of the New Jerusalem? The genre would lead me to expect the latter.

With this in mind, you might understand why I do not follow literalist approaches to Rev 20:1-7. One author who advocates a literal reading of the text claimed that "Old Testament promises plus Rev 20:1-10 demand a literal, earthly kingdom of 1000 years."⁶³ Another author⁶⁴ has argued that, though the chains around Satan's arms may

⁶²Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*, 270-88.

⁶³J. S. Feinberg, *Continuity and Discontinuity*, 82.

⁶⁴Walvoord, "The Theological Significance."

be metaphorical, the 1000 years definitely are not. The distinction between the chains and the 1000 years is too subtle for me. I agree with Waltke when he says that if in Revelation 20 the "abyss," "chain," "dragon," and "key" are symbolic "why should the number 1000 be literal, especially when the numbers are notoriously symbolic in apocalyptic literature?"⁶⁵

Dispensationalism sees no problem in understanding the metaphorical qualities or, to put it another way, the redemptive-historical function of biblical themes and institutions. Indeed, the tabernacle looks forward to Christ, the priesthood to Christ, the sacrifices to Christ, the exodus to Christ. Jerusalem and Zion prefigure Christ. But is this not a form of what is called spiritualization? It is not a big step to go on and say that Israel anticipates Christ and the Church (through union with Christ). This identification is particularly plausible in the light of the fact that the Church is called every conceivable synonym of Israel (i.e., 1 Pet 2:9; Romans 4). In addition, as Waltke has pointed out,⁶⁶ there is no clear and undebated reference to a future independent fulfillment of Old Testament promises to ethnic Israel in the entire New Testament.

I have read among dispensationalists that there is a distinction between *types* which do have this kind of spiritual fulfillment in the New Testament and *prophecies* which have a literal fulfillment. The problem with this literalist approach is that prophecies include typologies, for instance the prophecy of the New Temple at the end of Ezekiel. I would also see an instance of this in prophecies which give promises to Israel.

I believe that much of the Old Testament has been fulfilled in Christ and since Christ is an Israelite and Christians are in union with Christ, Christians partake of the benefits promised to Israel and Judah.

When we read in the Old Testament of such institutions as the tabernacle/temple, exodus, sacrifice, priesthood, divine warfare, Zion/Jerusalem, we are reading of things which have passed away never to be seen again because the reality of these shadows has come. It is incredible to think that the history of redemption might progress by a backward step so that the temple would be rebuilt, or sacrifice reinstituted, or the priesthood reconsecrated. Zion stands for the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the first born (Hebrews 12) in a way that to me at least countervenes what Scofield said (*Scofield Bible Correspondence School*, 45-46, quoted in Poythress, 24):

Jerusalem is always Jerusalem, Israel always Israel, Zion always Zion. . . . Prophecies may never be spiritualized, but are always literal.

⁶⁵B. Waltke, *Continuity and Discontinuity*, 273.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

One additional problem I have with so-called literal interpretations of the biblical text is that they often resort to distinctions, like a distinction between fulfillment and application. Poythress points out a similar phenomenon when he deals with Scofield's note on Gal 3:8-9, 16-19, 29:

these verses, note especially vs. 29, "If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

He says that Scofield "neatly defuses this problem by arguing that there are two parallel offsprings, physical and spiritual, earthly and heavenly. Hence fulfillment in the spiritual offspring is not the fulfillment Israel waits for."⁶⁷

I have heard it said that the New Testament only witnesses to literal fulfillment of prophecy. I, however, remain unconvinced. I think it is more than fair to say that the New Testament leads us to allow for if not expect nonliteral fulfillments to Old Testament prophecies. The following texts, among others, deserve careful study in this regard: Amos 15:11-12 in Acts 15:14-18, and Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2:16-21. Notice as well the prophecy in Isaiah 40 that "every mountain shall be lifted up and every hill made low" as it is used in reference to the events before Jesus' earthly ministry has a non-literal fulfillment.

As I study the text and meditate upon the second coming of Christ there is yet another signal that leads me to expect a non-literal interpretation of prophecy and that is the use of multiple images for the same event. In Revelation 1 Christ returns on a cloud; however, Rev 19:11ff. pictures Christ on a horse. As I meditate upon it I would expect neither, however I should be open to both.

This leads me to my last statement. We should be open to literal and/or spiritual fulfillments of prophecy. That is why I remain open on most questions of eschatology. The generation that received Christ had it all scoped out. They listened to the cries of the late apocalyptic writers and thought that a literal political divine warrior would appear. This expectation was prevalent not just among Pharisees; even John the Baptist held it. But they were wrong. Jesus was a Divine Warrior, but his warfare was spiritual, not physical.⁶⁸ He countervailed their expectations. If we insist on a precise literal interpretation of prophecy are we not in danger of falling into the same error?

⁶⁷Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalism*, 26-27.

⁶⁸Longman, "The Divine Warrior."

RESPONSE TO ELLIOTT JOHNSON

Let me begin by thanking Dr. Johnson for his thoughtful paper. I am delightfully surprised with how much we are in agreement on a number of important matters. Each year, I believe, dispensationalist and covenantal biblical scholars come closer and closer to one another. The biblical text itself is bringing us together in unity.

I must also confess, however, that a part of me is asking whether we are really dealing with "the fundamental difference between dispensationalist hermeneutics and other expressions of evangelical hermeneutics."¹ My skepticism arises because, though we seem able to agree to such a large extent on method, exegetical conclusions are often so different.

Nonetheless, if Dr. Johnson's paper represents the heart of dispensationalism, then it is truly welcome to see how close it is to a Vosian biblical theology. Johnson's use of the organic metaphor of bud-flower for the relationship between the Testaments is very typical of the school of biblical theology as we practice it at Westminster. While saying this, let me also protest that it is unfair to place the bud-flower analogy over against Waltke's egg-shell image as if that describes his whole approach to the relationship between the New and the Old. Indeed, I don't think we can use one type of metaphor to understand the relationship between the Testaments.

It is reductionist to describe the complex and subtle relationship between the Testaments under one model. I can see, on the one hand, how certain themes unfold slowly and progressively along the lines of a bud turning into a beautiful flower. The divine warrior theme so develops. However, some themes and institutions of the Old Testament pass away and are discarded in a sense. The tabernacle was an important institution and theological concept in the Old Testament, but it is rendered obsolete once Christ comes. As a matter of fact, it may be best to see that often there is both organic development (bud-flower) as well as a contrast (egg-shell) between the Old and New Testaments. As we study covenant, we chart an organic development as one covenant builds on another finally culminating in the New Covenant. But we must also feel the force of a statement like that of Heb 8:13:

By calling the covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

In light of the above, I would address three questions to Dr. Johnson:

1. How does your understanding of the progress of redemption especially as captured in the organic bud-flower image differ from that of covenant theology as expressed by Vos?

¹ All unmarked quotations are taken from the paper by E. E. Johnson.

2. Is the view which you represent a significant departure from classic dispensationalism?
3. Isn't there also some force to the shell-egg analogy? With this last question let me remark how surprised I am to be arguing for discontinuity between the Testaments in the present crowd.

My next reaction to Johnson's paper is to inquire whether it is fair to say that the New Testament's use of the Old Testament illustrates a consistent application of the historical-grammatical method. I will raise this issue by questioning some of Johnson's exegetical arguments.

1. Serpent=Satan. I agree with his analysis as far as he has gone. But he has not established that the New Testament could have known that the serpent was specifically Satan simply from a historical-grammatical exegesis of Genesis 2 and 3. For instance, why should we say that the serpent is Satan and not one of his minions? In other words, in its Old Testament context the serpent is an unnamed, unspecified enemy of God. That it is Satan is only to be learned from the New Testament.
2. Johnson's work on Galatians is helpful. He does an admirable job of showing that "the Old Testament is sufficient to *anticipate* the descendents of Abraham who was yet to come and who will accomplish what God had promised."

I do not agree with him, however, that Paul has pursued a strict "historical investigation" to come to this interpretation. I say this especially in light of the first part of Gal 3:16 (which Johnson does not deal with):

The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people.

Thus, Paul not only identifies Christ as the seed, he excludes the Israelites and specifically Isaac and the other patriarchs from association with the seed. In other words, the difficult part of the verse to establish from the Old Testament is not the fulfillment in Christ, but Paul's exclusion of others. Can we really get this understanding from a strictly historical-grammatical interpretation of the text? As I read along in the patriarchal narratives I get the impression that as Isaac is born and as the Israelites expand, the promise of the seed is involved.

In light of this, I would like to consider Johnson's criticism of G. E. Ladd.² He worries about Ladd's language when he speaks of the New Testament *reinterpreting* the Old Testament. However, Ladd is not saying that the New Testament is reinterpreting in the sense of

²G. E. Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism" in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (IVP, 1977) 17-59.

contradicting or changing the character of the Old Testament as much as he rightly recognizes that the New Testament often brings out the deeper meaning of the passage which was veiled from the Old Testament audience. In light of the Christ event, we can see the connection.

A fair reader of Hos 11:1 in its Old Testament context must admit that Matthew's reference to it in connection with Christ's life is unanticipated (3:15). The Old Testament context clearly remembers the historical exodus. Nonetheless, it is appropriate because of the exodus analogy of Christ's life which is developed fully by the Scriptures. We cannot impute a knowledge of this, however, to Hosea or anyone in the Old Testament time period. It became clear only in the light of the Christ event.

In my paper I mentioned that dispensationalists agree with covenant theologians in noting the connection between the tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifice and Jesus Christ. These Old Testament institutions are fulfilled in Christ. However, the connection between these institutions and Christ was not known by the Old Testament authors nor could it be gleaned by means of a historical-grammatical interpretation of the text. It is only in the light of the New Testament that these Old Testament shadows are *reinterpreted* in the light of the Christ event.

In the same manner as the tabernacle, sacrifice, and priesthood, we should follow the overall pattern of the New Testament and explicit New Testament references to the church as "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" (1 Pet 2:9) in order to identify Israel with the church today. Indeed all of these, including Israel, are "spiritualized" in 1 Pet 2:5: "you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

Let me conclude that I am excited to see Dr. Johnson use the bud-flower image to describe the relationship between Old Testament and New Testament. It is this understanding which leads to a view that the Old Testament ultimately must be read in the light of the New Testament and not vice versa. I'm not a gardener, so when I look at a bud I have no idea what the flower is going to look like in detail, its color or shape. I cannot predict the form or shape of the flower from its bud. But I do understand the bud better after looking at the flower. It is imperative to read the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament.

WHAT I MEAN BY HISTORICAL-GRAMMATICAL INTERPRETATION AND HOW THAT DIFFERS FROM SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION

ELLIOTT E. JOHNSON

THE subject of our dialogue focuses our attention on a fundamental difference between dispensational hermeneutics and other expressions of evangelical hermeneutics. While this is a fundamental difference, yet the difference is not at the level of principles. It is fundamental because it determines one's view of the structure of progressive revelation and consequently influences the interpretation of many passages and the role and value of Old Testament revelation for today and for the future. Yet the differences are not basically in principle. All agree on the necessity of grammatical interpretation and historical interpretation and most agree on the legitimacy of literal interpretation and interpretation by the analogy of faith. It is rather a difference in the appropriate application of these principles. My view of appropriate use of these principles begins with and is ultimately controlled by what I think is entailed in the fact that "the Bible alone and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written, and therefore inerrant in the autographs."

This presupposition in my view of hermeneutics entails that each book of the Bible expresses a unified message and the collection of books forms a unified canon of Scripture. That unity expresses itself in the coherence of the composition of each book consistent with the norms of the appropriate literary genre. In addition, that unity expresses itself in the compatibility of truth expressed in the progressive revelation of the whole canon. So while there are changes in the meaning in the progressive unfolding of the revelation of Old Testament truths, those changes do not include alterations of the original sense or contradictions with the first expression of the truth. An original expression of a historical truth may have a limited time of application (as with the truths about animal sacrifices) and thus be replaced by a subsequent historical truth resting on the completed work of Christ. But such a replacement of an original truth does not

alter, contradict, nor deny the original expression of truth. It merely reflects that God's dealing with man may change as the fulfillment of God's purposes progressively unfold.

This fundamental difference in the use of the principles became clarified in the ongoing debate between John F. Walvoord and George Eldon Ladd. The debate focused on the interpretation of Old Testament prophetic passages in their own context. In the terms of our discussion, a historical-grammatical interpretation of Old Testament is sufficient to discover God's introductory or initial word on a prophetic subject. Walvoord called for this consistent, contextual handling of an Old Testament text which he called literal.¹

Ladd objected to this approach. He concluded: "The 'literal hermeneutic' does not work . . . Old Testament prophecies must be interpreted in the light of the New Testament to find their deeper meaning."² Such an application of the "analogy of faith" would result in his approach that "the Old Testament is *reinterpreted* in light of the Christ event."³ This approach then received a wide acceptance among other evangelical interpreters with different conclusions concerning a future millennium. Anthony A. Hoekema in an amillennial perspective writes: "I agree with him (Ladd) that the Old Testament *must be* interpreted in the light of the New Testament."⁴ In addition, Lorain Boettner who holds a postmillennial view of progressive revelation writes: "I am favorably impressed with Ladd's discussion of the manner in which Old Testament prophecy is interpreted and applied by the New Testament."⁵ This application of the analogy of faith results in a "spiritual reinterpretation" of various Old Testament prophecies but apparently without uniform control as evidenced by the difference in the conclusions held by the interpreters just quoted.

These two differences—a consistent, contextual interpretation of an Old Testament text and an interpretation of Old Testament texts based on the analogy of faith will form the crux of what I mean by historical-grammatical interpretation and how that differs from spiritual interpretation.

THE HISTORICAL-GRAMMATICAL INTERPRETATION

First, a historical-grammatical interpretation is a consistent, contextual understanding based upon the text seen in the immediate

¹John F. Walvoord, "The Theological Context of Premillennialism," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 108:431 (1951), and *The Millennial Kingdom* (Findlay, OH: Dunham, 1959).

²George Eldon Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," *The Meaning of the Millennium*, ed. Robert G. Clouse (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1977) 23.

³*Ibid.*, 21 (emphasis mine).

⁴*Ibid.*, Hoekema, 55 (emphasis mine).

⁵*Ibid.*, Boettner, 47.

context.⁶ This reading of a text in its immediate context is a natural reading of an Old and New Testament passage and is sufficient because the Old Testament text alone introduces what is necessary at that time in history and faithfully anticipates what will follow in the progress of revelation.

Such a contextual reading and understanding considers two controlling issues—the reading is limited to the grammatical senses of the text and is expressed within the historical occasion and *sitz im leben* of the text. Neither issue, however, mandates the sense or reference of the text. Grammatical forms and syntactical constructions merely signify a range of viable meanings from the language stock. Its contextual usage controls whether the meaning intended is narrow or general, a specified or ambiguous use of the grammatical construction. In addition to the textual development of the context, the historical features fashion the context in which the constructions are interpreted.

Historical context includes both the expectations of the occasion in which the book is written and the subject matter about which the book speaks. However, if the understanding is based upon the text, the historical context neither dictates the meaning of a text nor does it determine meanings unexpressed in the text but rather fills in the exegete's knowledge of shared historical meanings expressed in the text. In order to test the adequacy of historical-grammatical interpretation, two Old Testament passages will be examined as illustrations in the application of the principle:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Gen 3:1-5 | Is the "serpent" Satan? |
| Gen 12:7 | Is the "seed" Christ? |
| Gen 3:1-5 | The Old Testament is adequate to <i>introduce</i> the enemy of God in the serpent. |

While the text of Genesis introduces the serpent as an animal which walked upright and was more subtle than any animal (Gen 3:1, 14), the world of Moses knew the serpent as an animal shrouded in mystery. Nahum M. Sarna speaks of its mystical role in ancient life. "With its venomous bite, it can inflict sudden and unexpected death. It shows no limbs, yet it is gracefully and silently agile. Its glassy eyes—lidless, unblinking, strangely lustrous—have a fixed and penetrating stare. Its longevity and the regular, recurrent sloughing of its skin impart an aura of youthfulness, vitality, and rejuvenation. Small wonder that the snake simultaneously aroused fascination and revulsion, awe and dread. Throughout the ancient world, it was endowed

⁶It is understood that the immediate context includes conventions of the literary genre. The conventions influence both the expectations of one who reads a text and the exegesis of a text conforming to the literary clues expressed in the text.

with divine or semidivine qualities; it was venerated as an emblem of health, fertility, immortality, occult wisdom, and chaotic evil; and it was often worshiped. The serpent played a significant role in the mythology, the religious symbolism, and the cults of the ancient Near East.”⁷ So he proceeds to conclude that the Genesis narrative demythologizes the cultural concepts so that the text presents the serpent as simply as one of “the creatures that the Lord God has made.” In other words, the historical cultural environment does not inform the text.

Yet does the text treat the serpent as a mere animal? Bruce Waltke comments: “No sensitive reader can construe the story as an aetiology explaining the antagonism between humans and snakes, as the professor [Frank M. Cross] . . . insisted was the ‘plain sense’ of the passage.”⁸

Waltke’s introduction of the issue of plain interpretation raises the question of whether the text in context is adequate to demonstrate that the serpent was more than an animal? And there is sufficient textual basis since the serpent speaks. The decisive evidence is not that the animal simply speaks, for animals before the fall may well have had a greater capacity for verbal communication. The evidence is featured in what the serpent said. For the serpent did not speak from an animal’s position under man, nor an animal’s dissatisfaction with any features of creation within an animal’s experience. The serpent did not speak as an animal. Rather the serpent spoke as God’s enemy. He questioned God’s word. He denied God’s word. He raised doubt about whether God had man’s best interests in view. He proposed a strategy of rebellion by which man could establish himself as equal to God. And as such, the narrative of Genesis introduced the enemy of God in his essential character and strategy. So Waltke summarizes, “The serpent, a diabolical personality, more intelligent than human, filled with a spirit of unbelief, and venomously opposed to God and man, *obviously* originating outside of the creation described in Genesis 1–2.”⁹ Thus the text of Genesis, in the grammatical and historical sense establishes the presence of the enemy of God speaking in the words of the serpent. In addition, the original hearers (readers) had to imagine the world of the original creation in which to understand the serpent. As such the text is sufficient to introduce the enemy of God in a true schematic outline of what would be revealed later.

⁷Nahum M. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989) 24.

⁸Bruce K. Waltke, “Kingdom Promises as Spiritual,” *Continuity and Discontinuity*, ed. John S. Feinberg (Westchester, IL: Crossway) 266.

⁹*Ibid.*, Waltke, 267.

Gen 12:1–3 and 7 The Old Testament is sufficient to *anticipate* the descendant of Abraham who was yet to come and who will accomplish what God had promised.

The first mention of Abraham's seed appears in Gen 12:7 where God promised: "To your seed I will give this land." The identity of the seed in this first promise was not clear at this point to Abraham nor to the reader as he reads. This is due to the collective sense of the term "seed." If God were referring to Abraham's immediate offspring, He would mean *Isaac*. Or if He were referring to Abraham's offspring in general, He would mean his *many descendants*. Or it is also possible that God had some other descendant in mind. This lack of clarity has left confusion when the text is compared to Paul's comments in Gal 3:16: "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed." The Scripture does not say "and to seeds" meaning many people, but "and to your seed" meaning one person, who is Christ. While it remains unspecified whether Paul was alluding to Gen 12:7, the fact that 12:7 includes the first mention of "seed" allows us to conclude that Paul would have had this passage in mind at least. But then the question becomes, does Gen 12:7 mean Christ or at least anticipate Christ?

CONTEXTUAL INTERPRETATION OF "SEED" IN GENESIS 12–22

The anticipation of a posterity for Abraham first emerged as God revealed His role and plan for Abram in history. The story begins with the divine call of Abram in which God made promises addressed to Abram. The final promise was staggering in scope and in significance for the history of mankind: "And all the families of the earth shall be blessed through you (or shall bless themselves by you)."¹⁰ The voice of the verb (whether middle or passive) specifies Abram's role to be mediator of blessing for the whole world. These promises imply three distinct stages of blessing: blessing on Abram, then on those who have direct interaction with him, and finally on the entire human race through him. Due to the scope of this promised blessing, one would reasonably anticipate that the role of mediation would entail other generations following Abram to accomplish the scope of blessing as stated.

This anticipation is then introduced as the blessing of land where Abram stood would be given "to your seed" (12:17). As already noted, the term "seed" includes some ambiguity in reference. As a collective noun, it is capable of referring to one descendant or many descendants.

¹⁰The niph'al form of *b-r-k* is found only in Gen 12:3, 18:18, 28:14; the respective contexts do not show how it differs from the hithpa'el form in Gen 22:18, 16:4, so it may well be reflexive.

Abram's understanding of what God intended would be further clarified as the revelation progressed in the unfolding events that follow. Abram shares with the reader the same uncertainty about what God was exactly saying. Knowing this, God clarified the sense further.

After Abram had sacrificed his claim to the land to Lot, God repeated the promises to give the land but now clarified that it would be given to both Abram and to his seed (13:15). In addition, He promised for the first time that the seed would be made innumerable (13:16). In 15:1-5, God further specified that his heir would be a physical descendant and his descendants would become innumerable. Finally, in reference to this seed (15:18) God formed a covenant with Abram to grant what He promised to the seed. Nahum Sarna aptly describes it: "God contracts a solemn covenant with the patriarch, who becomes the passive beneficiary of His unilateral obligation, unconditionally assumed. It would seem that the form of this covenant is modeled after the royal land-grant treaty common in the ancient Near East."¹¹

When we reflect upon what God meant by "seed," we must first distinguish the different contexts in which the seed is promised. Then the sense of "seed" can be recognized in the context of each distinct promise. There are four distinct promises to Abram:

I will give you a seed,
I will multiply the number of your seed,
I will give the land to your seed and
I will bless all peoples through your seed.

One element is common to each promise which was specified in Gen 15:3, 4: the seed is a physical descendant from Abram. That is the basic sense to which may be added additional senses in various contexts. In that regard, there is a spiritual sense associated with each promise; in the first context it is a divinely called and provided seed, in the second a divinely multiplied seed, in the third the seed is a recipient of a divine gift and in the fourth the seed is an agent of divine blessing. In the first two, the seed is the divine gift and in the last two, the seed responds to God in some responsible way—both to receive what God gives and to mediate that to others. In addition, when the last two are compared, the promise of land is one instance of blessing while the mediation of blessing involves broader blessings.

The reader may well ask as Abraham certainly asked after Isaac was born, Is Isaac this seed? I think it is clear that in the sense of the first promise, Isaac is the God-provided ("in Isaac your seed shall be

¹¹Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989) 114.

called," 21:12) physical descendant ("I—Abraham—have borne a son in his old age," 21:17) in distinction to Ishmael. It is also clear that he is the first in the line of physical posterity. But he is not the seed to whom the land was given nor was he a willing mediator of blessing to Jacob. Moses takes pains to deliberately tell the story of Rebekah's pregnancy in which God's choice of Jacob, the younger, was made (Gen 25:19–34) and as a consequence Isaac's responsibility to bless according to God's choice (Gen 27:1–46). Isaac accomplished his responsibility ironically but did not meet it through his willing obedience. In these contexts, Isaac was clearly not the spiritual seed in the sense of meeting his responsibility.

So Isaac was Abraham's seed in a physical and in a God-given sense as were Jacob and his twelve sons. The text of Genesis also indicates that they are spiritually responsive in a limited but genuine sense. So the question whether Isaac or Jacob or Judah was Abraham's seed, we must answer with a qualified yes. To the extent that the answer is no, as illustrated in Isaac's case, to that extent an anticipation remained that, what God had promised, would come to pass in His provision.

THE ANALOGY OF FAITH INTERPRETATION

A spiritual interpretation is based upon a use of the analogy of faith. The interpretation of an Old Testament passage is only reached on the basis of a subsequent canonical context so that the original text features only the spiritual meanings or ideals. I will attempt to prove that this spiritual interpretation is neither a necessary nor a valid use of the analogy of faith in the interpretation of an Old Testament passage. Rather, the analogy of faith properly used enriches the reader's original understanding of the Old Testament passage from the perspective of fulfillment or more complete revelation in the New Testament.

A historical-grammatical interpretation is an interpretation of an Old Testament passage in the immediate context. The controversy between Walvoord and Ladd raised the question whether additional interpretation was needed. Ladd followed by Hoekema and Boettner affirmed that it was absolutely necessary. Waltke expresses the principle well, "the spiritual sense is to interpret the covenantal promises in the light of salvation history"¹² in which "the historical eggshells"¹³ are removed from the meanings of the Old Testament passage interpreted in context.

¹²Ibid., Waltke, 263.

¹³Bruce K. Waltke, "A Canonical Process Approach to the Psalms," *Tradition and the Testaments*, ed. John S. Feinberg and Paul D. Feinberg (Chicago: Moody, 1981) 16.

Such a spiritual interpretation of an Old Testament passage is not reached as an independent conclusion in hermeneutics. Rather its warrant is derived from the New Testament's use of the Old Testament. Waltke argues, "the classical rule *sacra scripture sui ipsius interpres* (the Bible interprets itself)—more specifically, the New interprets the Old—should be accepted by all Christian theologians. Is it not self-evident that the author of Scripture is the final exponent of his own thoughts?"¹⁴ He further supports the validity of his argument with the conclusions of S. Lewis Johnson, "The use of the Old Testament in the New is the key to the solution of the problem of hermeneutics. Unfortunately that has been overlooked, but surely, if the apostles are reliable teachers of biblical doctrine, then they are reliable instructors in the science of hermeneutics."¹⁵

The question that thus emerges is whether a spiritual interpretation is warranted by the use of the analogy of faith? Walter Kaiser would reject the approach as invalid. "In no case must . . . *later* teaching be used exegetically (or in any other way) to unpack the meaning or to enhance the usability of the individual text which is the object of study."¹⁶ Kaiser's objection needs to be heard as a warning to challenge this use of the analogy of faith as normative. Yet at the same time, the unity of canonical revelation admits the compatibility in meaning between a New Testament *interpretation* of an Old Testament passage. Following such an interpretation certainly is a valid use of the analogy of faith. The more specific question is whether the spiritual interpretation is the *valid* New Testament interpretation.

Ladd calls for a "reinterpretation" in light of the Christ event.¹⁷ Such a reinterpretation would certainly imply an alteration of the original meaning. Waltke objects to this: "The prophetic interpretation of these old texts is not a reinterpretation of them away from original, authorial meaning; rather it is a more precise interpretation of them in light of the historical realities."¹⁸ Yet as Waltke argues for a canonical interpretation of the Psalms, which win their full significance in Jesus Christ who fulfills these Psalms, he concludes, "Those elements in each psalm presenting the king as anything less than ideal, such as his confession of sins, are the historical eggshells"¹⁹ which must be peeled off in a more precise interpretation. But is such a peeling away of a

¹⁴Waltke, "Kingdom Promises," 264.

¹⁵S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., *The Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980) 23.

¹⁶Walter Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981) 140.

¹⁷Ladd, 21.

¹⁸Waltke, "A Canonical Process," 15.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 16.

historical husk *valid* in the interpretation of an Old Testament passage? Is it not a version of reinterpretation of the original text?

Anthony Hoekema is more forthright when he affirms that Amillennialists "believe that though many Old Testament prophecies are indeed to be interpreted literally, many others are to be interpreted in a nonliteral way."²⁰ He then approves of Martin J. Wyngaarden²¹ who shows how the New Testament spiritualizes many Old Testament concepts: Zion, Jerusalem, the seed of Abraham, Israel, the temple, sacrifices and so on. So the eggshells of geographical, national and historical aspects of the hope of a seed of Abraham or of Jerusalem must be peeled away. But is such a subtraction from a contextual historical-grammatical interpretation *valid*?

Someone may well respond that it is *valid* because it is *necessarily* entailed in the New Testament's interpretation of the Old Testament. I would like to argue that such a spiritual interpretation is *not necessary* because the meaning understood in the New Testament *corresponds* to the meaning *expressed* in the Old Testament.²² It is not a meaning reduced to an egg with the shell peeled away but a corresponding flower in the New Testament of an earlier expressed bud in the Old Testament or a building in the process of completion in the New Testament of a foundation laid earlier. The New Testament interpretation is the comprehension of the completed meaning intended as introduced but left undeveloped in the Old Testament. As such, the final shape of the flower or building may not be fully anticipated in the bud or the foundation, but the essentials of content and form are revealed in the introduction. This thesis will be demonstrated in the New Testament's use of the serpent in Gen 3:15 and the seed of Abraham in Gen 12:1-3 and 7.

Genesis 3:1-5 and Revelation 12:9 The New Testament interpretation merely *fills in* what is left unexpressed in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament introduces an evil one who tempts Eve and Adam with a strategy of rebellion against God. He is introduced in position as the first enemy and in strategy as a rebel against God's will.

²⁰Hoekema, 172.

²¹Martin J. Wyngaarden, *The Future of the Kingdom in Prophecy and Fulfillment* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1934).

²²The degree of correspondence varies dependent upon the kind of Old Testament expression and the stage that the statement appears in the progress of revelation. Two helpful attempts have been made to classify the degree of correspondence of Old Testament prophecy but more work is needed. G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980), and Franz Delitsch, *Psalms*, Vol. I. A discussion of such a classification is beyond the scope of this paper.

In the progress of revelation, this introductory foundation does not change. Rather the creature is an angel who is alluded to in his prior history under the figure of a dragon. His names are given to be satan and devil as well as Lucifer. The revelation which is added does not change the identity of the enemy introduced but answers questions of early existence and creaturely character.

Gen 12:1-3 and 7 and Gal 3:16 The New Testament interpretation *unfolds* the intended meaning of the Old Testament promise although that meaning may not be fully evident when the promise was first expressed.

In reading the Old Testament promise, we recognized four distinct promises concerning the seed as it was originally stated in different contexts. I would like simply to trace one of the promises as it unfolds in the Old Testament revelation. The focus in Gal 3:16 and again in 3:19 is upon the *giving* of the promises to Abraham and *to his seed*. That focus corresponds in particular to the promise as stated:

I will give the land to the seed.

We noted in context that neither Isaac nor his immediate posterity were the ones to whom the promise of land was given. In fact, God announced that Abraham's descendants would remain in another land, as exiles 400 years (15:13). Yet the land was still given "to your seed" as God said "I give this land from the river Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates" (15:18, 19). Thus the question emerges: To what generation or to what individual was the land given?

As a context for the pursuit of an answer, one additional revelation is given to Abraham. After he had in obedience offered Isaac, the angel of YHWH said, "I swear by myself . . . that *because* you have done this . . . I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies and through your seed all nations on earth will be blessed *because* you have obeyed me" (22:15-18). For the first time, Abraham is identified as the effectual mediator through whom aspects of the promise are repeated. In other words, blessings will be received by Abraham's descendants even if the promise may not be received by those descendants. The one aspect of particular interest to us in our search is the gift of possession of the cities of their enemies. The cities will be possessed because of Abraham even if the gift of the land as a whole were not received.

As Moses addressed the people poised on the shores of the Jordan river, he made two relevant comments. First, the good land had been given to Israel's forefathers—Abraham and the patriarchs (Deut 1:35). Second, he quoted YHWH's word that He would give the land to the new generation and they would take possession of it (Deut 1:39). Then

YHWH spoke to Joshua after Moses' death. He promised, "I will give you every place where you set your foot as I promised Moses" (Josh 1:3). God will give Joshua and his generation whatever portion of the land he walks into. Clearly this contingency of walking into the land is not *sufficient* to earn the land or even to *merit* the promise. Rather God chose obedience as the avenue of receiving the gift of the land. It is the explicit identification of the *necessary* responsibility of the seed to be blessed with the gift of the land. The seed to whom the land is given would be the one who receives what is given.

As we read the record of Joshua's journey into the land, the period of conquest is concluded by summaries: "So Joshua took this entire land" (Josh 11:16) and "the land had rest from war" (Josh 11:23). Yet as an introduction to the occupation of the land, the text summarizes "when Joshua was old . . . there are still very large areas of the land to be taken over" (Josh 13:1 and Judg 2:1-3). So while the conquest was complete, the occupation left much land to yet be received. While they had been given the land, they had only "taken possession of the cities of their enemies." As God had promised to Abraham the gift of taking the cities (Gen 22:15-18), so the promise had been fulfilled (Josh 21:43-45). So like Isaac, Joshua and his generation did not receive the promise of the land but only what God had promised because of Abraham. So Joshua and his generation were Abraham's seed but not his seed to whom the land as a whole was entered and received. The anticipation of the complete reception of the gift of the land awaited the next generation as recorded in Judges (1).

The history of the nation in the land repeated the experiences of their forefathers. They were natural descendants with a limited though real spiritual claim on God's blessing gained because of Abraham. Even David, who prospered more than any seed of Abraham to gain a political control of all the land (2 Samuel 8-10), faltered in obedience before God and after Bathsheba his kingdom festered from within and finally was reduced from without.

So in the context of this Old Testament record of Abraham's descendants, Paul identified "Abraham's seed to whom the promises were given." Only one descendant of Abraham met the responsibility of obedience *necessary* to receive all that God had promised. And so Paul identified that only One descendant of Abraham was intended in the promise, "I will give the land to the seed."

When the two other promises of seed in Genesis are combined with this promise, the intended sense of the seed in Genesis becomes:

- (1) a physical descendant of Abram,
- (2) divinely provided,
- (3) bearing the God-given responsibility to receive what God gave so that He could mediate God's blessing.

Paul's understanding of this meaning is enriched and completed in the knowledge of each component but without altering any of the three original components:

- (1) a distant physical descendant of Abraham named Jesus (Matt 1:1, 2),
- (2) divinely provided in the virgin conception and birth from Mary (Matt 1:18–25),
- (3) fully bearing the obligation and responsibility of the law ultimately expressed in His death on the cross (Matt 16:21–23), after which He received the gift of the Father which He mediated on Pentecost (Acts 2:33, Phil 2:5–11).

The use of the analogy of faith, concerning Abraham's seed introduced in the three promises of Genesis, shows a correspondence in the three essential components of meaning in the interpretation of the New Testament. The corresponding relationship resembles the bud and the flower rather than the egg with the eggshell peeled off. Isaac or Joshua and his generation were partial fulfillments of the promise of a seed and Jesus Christ was the complete fulfillment.

One final promise remains to be considered which was not considered by Paul in Gal 3:16, 19:

"I will multiply your seed."

Has the sense of seed been altered in the New Testament from the sense understood in the Old Testament context? This promise is found in two texts:

"I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth" (13:16)
and

"Look at the heavens and count the stars . . . so shall your offspring be . . ." (15:5).

The context of the promise would lead to the expectation that the offspring would be a physical posterity as well as a God-provided posterity. For God had just promised: "a son coming from your own body will be your heir" (15:4).

In Rom 4:18–21, Paul refers to this promise in Gen 15:5. It is part of Paul's interpretation of Abraham's faith in God in the birth of Isaac. Isaac's birth is the first offspring in the promise of a great posterity.

On the other hand, in the preceding context of Rom 4:9–17, Paul does not refer to Gen 15:5 when he concluded that Abraham is the father of all believers. Rather Paul related the relationship of both Jews and Gentiles to Abraham with the general interpretation of his new name, Abraham—"I *have made* you a father of many nations"

found in Gen 17:5. Paul's argument is as follows: Abraham believed God before he was circumcised and as such received God's life as all others who believe without circumcision receive God's life. In addition, Abraham received the "sign of righteousness" in circumcision which he passed on to his physical offspring. All of these who believe based on this "sign of righteousness" from God also share his life from God. So "He is the father of us all" (Rom 4:16) both of those who believe as uncircumcised and those who believe with the sign of circumcision. That compares to what God said when he named him Abraham (Gen 17:5).

Thus Paul acknowledges two senses in which Abraham is father. He is father of all who believe, whether Jew or Gentile based on his name. He is also father of all natural and spiritual offspring based on the promise of a "multiplied seed." These two senses preserve the sense of seed in the promise as always including a physical relationship.

CONCLUSION

Thus in Gal 3:16, Paul is not understanding the promise of a seed as a semantic consideration. Unlike a midrashic commentary, which might comment on a collective noun and see it have a singular sense in view some contemporary fact, he has pursued a historic investigation. The distinction between "seeds" and "seed" is a historical distinction evident in the progressive revelation in the Old Testament. As such, Paul does interpret the Old Testament in light of the Christ event but this is not a reinterpretation. That is, it is not a textually altered spiritual sense nor a historically unrelated spiritual ideal. It is a historic sense understood within the grammatical range of a collective term. And this historic sense can be understood at each progressive stage, as God continued to work out what He promised until the climax was reached in Christ.

There is a continuity of meanings so that the Christ event *fills in* with clarity the divinely intended sense. While this is the meaning of "seed" in Gen 12:7, that meaning is not completely evident in the original context. Enough is known to anticipate what God would do but not enough is evident to specify what God did in particular until God acted in Christ. This pattern of interpretation is the basis for my anticipation that the gift of the land will be received by Christ in the history of our earth rather than in a new earth. Then and only then will the promise of Gen 12:7 be completely fulfilled.

PROVERBIAL STRINGS: COHESION IN PROVERBS 10

TED HILDEBRANDT

While most commentators take Proverbs 10-22 as a haphazard collection of proverbial sentences, this paper seeks to show that the sentences are cohesively ordered. The "proverbial string" is proposed as one such larger compositional unit. Four strings were discovered in Proverbs 10 (10:1-5, 6-11, 12-21, 22-30) with the sentences bonded by catchwords, rhetorical devices, themes, sound echoes, and shared syntactic constructions. The sentences of Proverbs 10-22 are an artistically woven tapestry with the position of each thread contributing to the beauty of the whole.

* * *

INTRODUCTION

FOR the vast majority of interpreters Prov 10:1-22:16 is a disorderly collage of independent proverbs. J. Thompson complains: "As for our canonical proverbs in particular, they fail to reach us, it would seem, for . . . they are jumbled together willy-nilly into collections."¹

Some, having discovered common themes or catchwords, allow for small proverbial clusters, but quickly go on to minimize the significance of such canonical collectional processes. So C. Rylaarsdam comments, "Even when two or more successive proverbs deal more or less with the same subject (for example 10:4-5) the connection seems incidental rather than organic."²

¹J. Thompson, *The Form and Function of Proverbs* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974) 15. R. N. Gordon, "Motivation in Proverbs," *Biblical Theology* 25.3 (1975) 49. W. O. E. Oesterly, *The Book of Proverbs* (London: Westminster Commentaries, 1929) 125, 73, 77. Keil and Delitzsch, *Proverbs* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973) 208; R. N. Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition* (NY: Walter de Gruyter, 1974) 67; R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 1017; J. Paterson, *The Wisdom of Israel* (London: Lutterworth and Abingdon, 1961) 63. McKane feels complete freedom to abandon the present canonical order totally restructuring the text (W. McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970) 413-15. Even G. von Rad expresses his annoyance at the "lack of order" (*Wisdom in Israel* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1972] 113).

²C. Rylaarsdam, *The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon*, *The Layman's Bible Commentary*, ed. B. N. Kelly (Richmond: John Knox, 1964) 48.

On the other side, P. Skehan, followed by S. Brown, suggests that the whole of Prov 10:1–22:16 is numerically composed of precisely 375 sentences (Solomon's name = 375) with mechanical 25 verse sub-units.³ The chimerical 25 verse sub-units, however, do not stand up to close analysis.

A methodology is needed that will expose and appreciate the principles utilized in constructing the proverbial collections.⁴ Literary shaping on the level of the collection suggests that there may also be interpretive significance on that level. The focus here will be in demonstrating that Proverbs 10 is bound into four cohesive "proverbial strings." Some initial speculations will be made as to their significance.

COHESIONAL FEATURES IN PROVERBS 10

The cohesiveness of the proverbial sentences can be seen by utilizing a linguistic methodology that includes phonology, syntax, semantics, and rhetorical levels of analysis.⁵ G. Boström may be consulted

³P. Skehan, *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, CBQMS I (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1971) 71, 25, 35f. S. Brown, "Structured Parallelism in the Composition and Formation of Canonical Books" (paper presented at SBL Meetings in Chicago, November 1988).

⁴Studies which have moved in this direction are: G. E. Bryce, "Another Wisdom 'Book' in Proverbs," *JBL* 91 (1972) 145–57, and a dissertation by R. Van Leeuwen, "Context and Meaning in Proverbs 25–27," SBLDS 96 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988). For Proverbs 11, O. Ploger, "Zur Auslegung der Sentenzensammlungen des Proverbia-buches," *Probleme biblischer Theologie*, ed. H. W. Wolff (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1971) 402–16. R. N. Whybray, "Yahweh-sayings and their Contexts in Proverbs 10, 1–22, 16," *La Sagesse de l'Ancien Testament*, ed. M. Gilbert (Gembloux: Leuven University, 1979) 153–65. H. J. Hermisson, *Studien zur israelitischen Spruchweisheit*, WMANT 28 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1968) 171–83. In Sumerian proverbial collections B. Alster, *Studies in Sumerian Proverbs* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1974) 14; J. M. Lindenberger, *The Aramaic Proverbs of Ahiggar* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1983) 21. In modern international collections M. Kuusi gives seven methods by which international proverbial collections are ordered ("Towards an International Type-System of Proverbs," *Proverbium* 19 [1972] 698–71). James Crenshaw's classic study "Prolegomena" in *Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom* (NY: KTAV, 1976) 14. Crenshaw has a list of seven structuring principles which he has observed: "a common letter (Pr. 11:9–12b; 20:7–9; 24–26); the same introductory word (Pr. 15:13–14, 16–17); the same idea (Pr. 16); the use of an acrostic (Pr. 31:10–31); paradoxical unity (Pr. 26:4–5); and numbers (Pr. 30:24–28). Thematic units characterize later proverbs (Pr. 1–9) and Sirach. . . ." Cf. also R. E. Murphy's excellent synthesis: *Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, and Esther* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981) 68. T. A. Hildebrandt, "Proverbial Pairs: Compositional Units in Proverbs 10–29," *JBL* 107.2 (June 1988) 207–24.

⁵Cf. Steven Perry ("Structural patterns in Proverbs 10:1–22:16: A study in biblical Hebrew stylistics," Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1987). Jack Berezov is very aware of cohesion and his excellent isolation of the various forms of the sayings has proven very helpful ("Single-line proverbs: A study of the sayings collected in Proverbs 10–22:16 and 25–29," Ph.D. diss., Hebrew Union College, 1987).

concerning letter/sound repetitions⁶ and Murphy for catchwords and thematic links.⁷ The following chart seeks to expose the relationships found in Prov 10:1–5.

STRING #1: Prov 10:1–5

Prov 10:1 lexically links itself with 10:5 via double repetition of a “son” + Character quality” (10:1, wise/foolish; 10:5, prudent/disgraceful) enveloping the string. While 10:1 is held apart from the theme of wealth which is maintained in 10:2–5. Prov 10:1 seems to provide a hinge which links back to themes developed in Proverbs 1–9 (“wise/foolish son”) while providing a title for the sentence proverbs which will dominate Prov 10:1–22:16.

Prov 10:2–3 forms a proverbial pair centered around the common theme of the relationship of the wicked/righteous to wealth/poverty. The rare initial נָל + Hiphil imperfect verb, syntactically binds the two verses together. Lexemically, 10:2 and 3 form a chiasm triggered by the catch-roots “righteousness”/“righteous” and “wicked”:

10:2	Wickedness wealth—no value	(A)
	Righteousness delivers from death	(B)
10:3	Righteous —no hunger (Yahweh supplies)	(B)
	Wicked's desire is frustrated	(A)

These catch-roots are varied morphologically in gender (“righteousness,” fem./“righteous,” masc.) and number (“wicked,” sing./pl.).

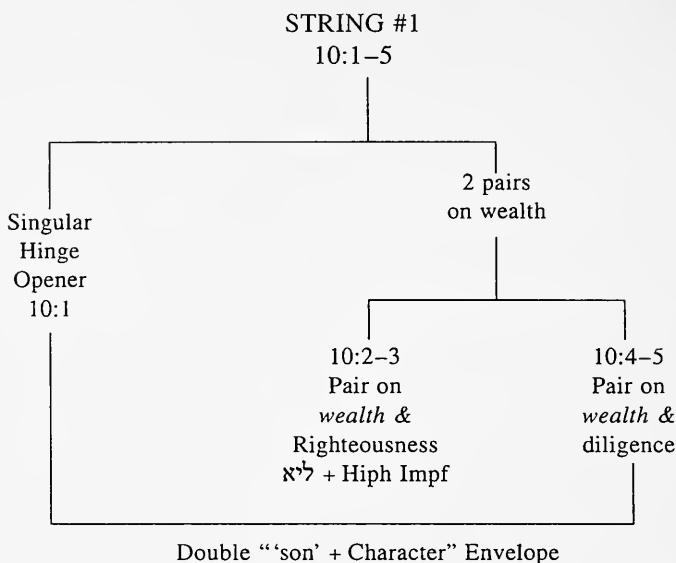
A second pair, Prov 10:4–5, continues the theme of wealth/poverty focusing on its relationship to diligence/laziness. Again, there is a pair bonding chiasm which is semantically triggered.

10:4	Lax hands—poor	(A)
	Diligent hands—wealth	(B)
10:5	Working son—prudent	(B)
	Sleeping son—shameful	(A)

The Qal active participle עֹשֶׂה in 10:4a may through assonance ring in אֹרֵךְ which begins 10:5a. Thematically the cohesion is clear although catch-words are absent. This lack of lexical linkage within the pair encourages the reader to discover the enveloping of the doubled noun phrase [“son” + Character] structure between 10:5a/b and 10:1a/b, thus defining the limits of this string.

⁶G. Boström, *Paronomasi i Den Äldre Hebreiska Maschallitteraturen* (Lund: Gleerup, 1928) 118ff. R. Margalit's guidelines will help check the process of determining whether sound links are significant (“Introduction to Ugaritic Prosody,” *UF* 7 (1975) 210–13). E.g., the positioning of letters should be more valued if in the initial or final positions.

⁷R. E. Murphy, *Wisdom Literature*, 68.



Translation emphasizing features of cohesion:⁸

1. A *wise son* brings joy to his father, ←
but a *foolish son* grief to his mother. ←

Wealth & Righteousness Pair

2. *No value* are treasures acquired by *wickedness*,
but *righteousness* delivers from death.
3. *No hunger* will the Lord allow for the *righteous*,
but he thwarts the craving of the *wicked*.

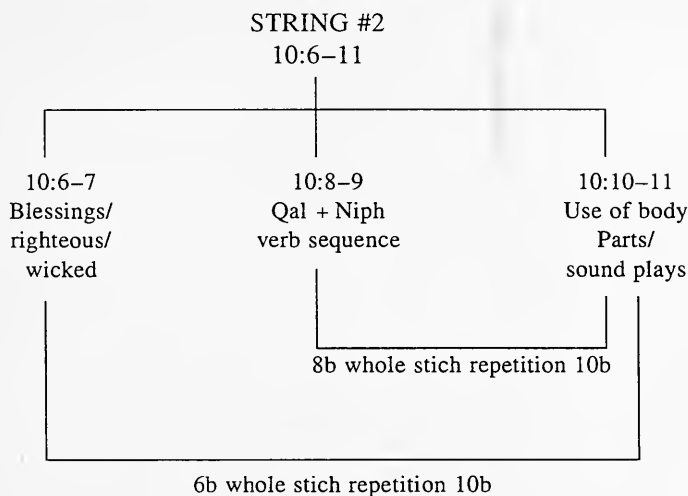
Wealth & Diligence Pair

4. Lazy hands make a man poor,
but diligent hands bring wealth.
5. He who gathers crops in summer is a *prudent son*,
but he who sleeps in the harvest is a *disgraceful son*.

In summary, Prov 10:1–5 is composed of two pairs centering on the theme of the relationship of the various character qualities (wicked/righteous [10:2–3]; lazy/diligent [10:4–5]) to wealth/poverty. A sense of closure is triggered by the enveloping doubly repeated “son” + Character noun phrase (10:1a/b, 5a/b).

⁸The translations are adapted from the NIV modifying it to highlight cohesive features present in the Hebrew text.

Translation emphasizing features of cohesion:



Translation emphasizing features of cohesion:

- 10:6 *Blessings are for the head of the righteous,
but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.*
- 10:7 *The memory of the righteous is for blessing,
but the name of the wicked will rot.*
- 10:8 *The wise in heart accept (Qal) commands,
but a chattering fool comes to ruin (Niph).*
- 10:9 *The man of integrity walks (Qal) securely,
but he who takes crooked paths will be found out (Niph).*

Concluding Pair

- 10:10 *Winking eyes cause grief,
and a chattering fool comes to ruin.*
- 10:11 *Well of life is the mouth of the righteous,
but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.*

STRING #2: Prov 10:6-11

The whole-stich repetition of 10:6b in 10:11b provides a clear structural envelop opening and closing this string. The first pair (10:6-7) features the blessedness of the righteous. The shared lexical units [ל, “blessing,” and “righteous”] in the first stichs and the repetition of “wicked” in both second stichs tightly draw the two sayings together.

Notice also the morphologically fixed character of "righteous" (masc., sing.) and "wicked" (masc., pl.), although the number of "blessing" is varied. Both 10:6a and 7a have a shared surface grammar (Subject + Prep. Phrase).⁹ Thus 10:6–7 is a clear proverbial pair.

Prov 10:8 breaks with the preceding pair being tied to 10:9. While there are no catchwords or strong semantic parallels, there may be some phonetic linkage as Boström has observed.¹⁰ Perhaps the clearest nexus between 10:8 and 9 is syntactic. In 10:8a and 9a, the verbs are both Qal Imperfect 3ms followed by rare final Niphal imperfect verbs (10:8b, 9b). Prov 10:8b may be linked via whole stich repetition to 10:10b which is featured by the weakening of the semantic connection between 10:8 and 10:9.

The lack of antithesis in 10:10 has caused many to strengthen the parallelism by accepting the LXX reading "He who reproves to the face reconciles." It is suggested that the Hebrew text of 10:8b has slipped down into 10:10b improperly.¹¹ String features such as the shared use of a Body part + Character quality in 10:10a/b and 10:11a/b; the rare final Niphals in 10:8b, 9b, 10b; and the whole stich repetition in 10:10b and 11b suggest that the MT reading of 10:10b is suited to the three pair string (10:6–11). Snell has recently noted that the LXX has a tendency to drop repeated proverbial units.¹² Prov 10:10a and 10:11a are clearly sound-linked in their opening words (קָרַץ/מְקַרֵּץ). The sound link is assonantly reinforced by the pathah/hireq of the second words חַיִּים/עֵינַי. Thematically both proverbs tell of the results of the use/misuse of body parts.

The whole stich repetitions draw the two preceding pairs together into the closing pair (10:10–11), thereby forming a tight six-verse string.

⁹Prov 10:6 and 7 have an interesting surface/deep structure transformation:

10:6a: Subject:N:Benefit [בְּרָכוֹת] + PP [Prep (ל) + NP:Experiencer (רָאשׁוֹנִים)]

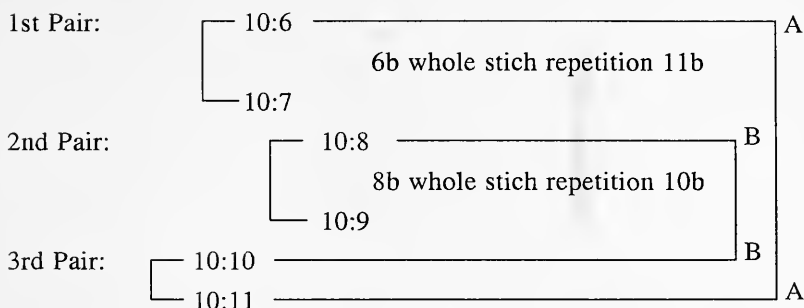
10:7a: Subject:NP:Agent [זֶכֶּר צַדִּיק] + PP [Prep (ל) + N:Benefit (בְּרָכָה)]

Note in both 6a and 7a there is a Benefit but in 6a the Benefit:N is the subject ["blessings"] and the Experiencer:NP ["head of the righteous"] is imbedded in the Prep Phrase. In 7a the Agent:NP is the subject ["memory of the righteous"] and the Benefit:N ["blessing"] is imbedded in the Prep Phrase. Thus, the deep structure role "Benefit" is shared but its location is reversed in the surface grammar (Subject + Prep Phrase). Kenneth Pike, *Grammatical Analysis* (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1982) 33–63; 397–409.

¹⁰Boström notices the suspicious כ-ט sequence in יִלְכֹם (10:8b) and בָּטַח (10:9a). A similar sound repetition is also found in בָּהֶם (10:9a) (Boström, 122).

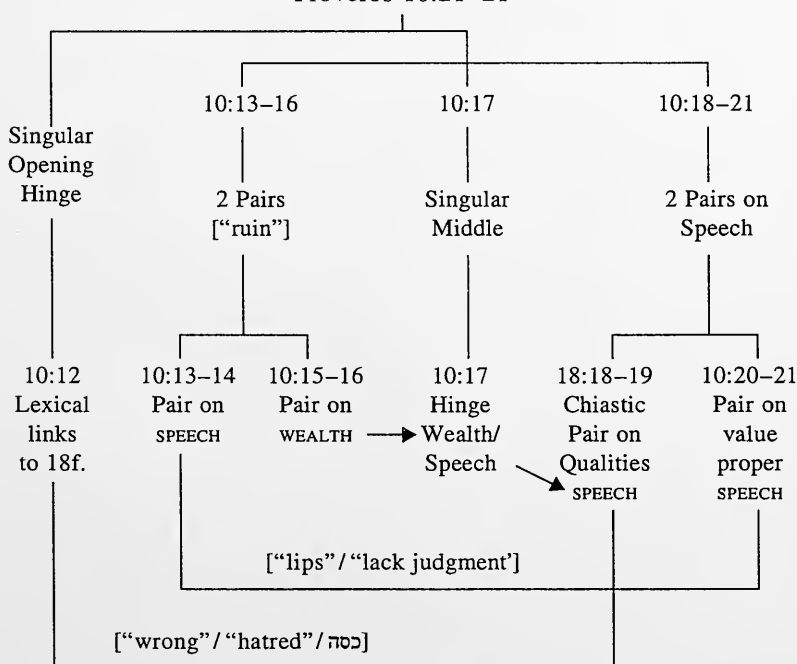
¹¹If the LXX reading is taken the whole stich repetition pattern would disappear. The LXX reading is accepted by McKane, *Proverbs*, 418; R. Scott, *Proverbs-Ecclesiastes* (Anchor Bible: Doubleday, 1965) 81; C. Toy, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs in ICC* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1904) 204; cf. R. B. Y. Scott, R. Alden, K. Aitken, and D. Kidner followed the JB, NEB, RSV and TEV in contrast to the NASB, NIV and KJV.

¹²Wm. Snell, "Twice Told Proverbs" (Eisenbrauns, forthcoming).



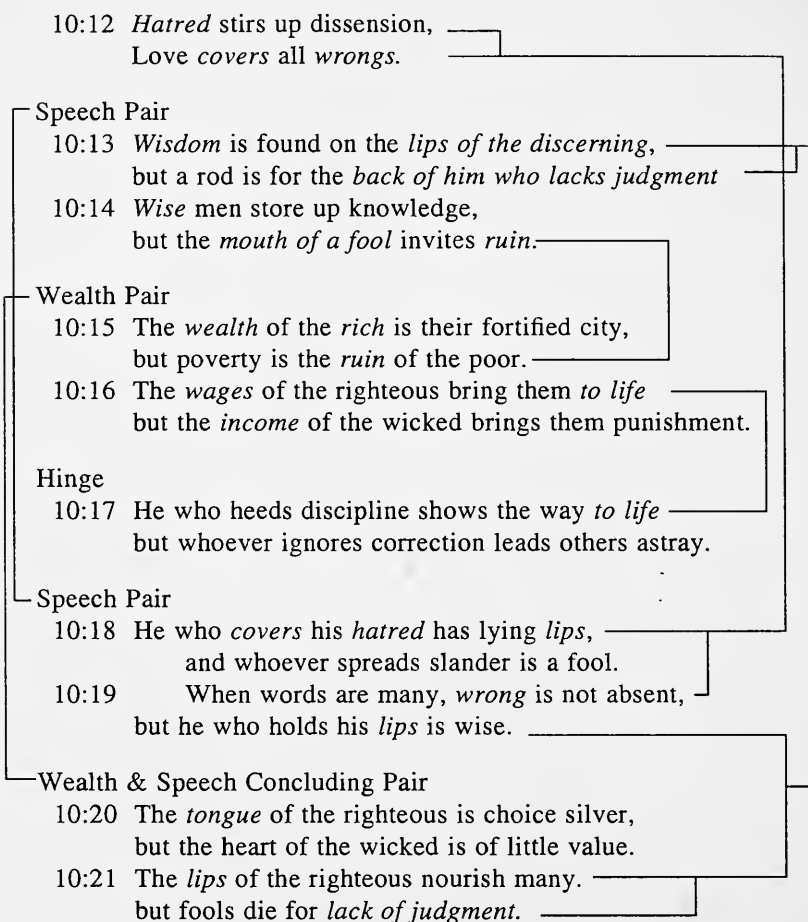
Prov 10:12 is transitional. The catchwords יִכְסֶּה/יִכְסֶּה provide a clear link between Prov 10:12 and 10:11. Boström observes the commonality in sound between פִּי יִשְׁעִים and פִּשְׁעִים—the latter being a collapsed form of the former.¹³ Prov 10:12 links downward into the next section (10:18f.). Thus Prov 10:12, though it hinges to the tail of the previous string (10:6–11), functions mainly as an opener to 10:12–21 even as 10:1 was for 10:1–5.

STRING #3 Proverbs 10:21–21



¹³Boström, *Paronomasi*, 122. Van Leeuwen in correspondence has also suggested that 10:11, 12 be considered a pair with a thematic chiasm: A:+ B:- B:- A:+. This may indicate that the two strings are chained together.

Translation emphasizing features of cohesion:



STRING #3: Prov 10:12–21

The repetition of “hatred” and also the root פסה in 10:12 and 18 suggests a bond with the 10:18–19 pair. This is strengthened by the repetition of “wrong” in Prov 10:12 and 10:19. This enveloping effect is furthered by “lacks judgment” in Prov 10:13 and 10:21. Similarly, Prov 10:13 and 10:18, 19, 21 all contain a common reference to “lips.” Notice that the NIV translates שפתיו “his tongue” in 10:19, thus biasing the translation in the direction of divergence, rather than translating it

consistently "lips" (cf. also פָּשַׁע/פָּשָׁעִים ["wrong"/"sin" NIV] in 10:12, 19 and תִּכְסֶּה/יִכְסֶּה ["overwhelms"/"covers" NIV] in 10:11, 12). Thus the cohesive collectional features are further obfuscated by translation.

Prov 10:13 and 10:14 are a proverbial pair. They are linked by the repetition of the חכם root. In the 10:13–14 pair, as in 10:2–3, there is a similar semantic shift of an abstract quality ("righteousness" [10:2]/"wisdom" [10:13]) to concrete persons manifesting those qualities ("righteous" [10:3]/"wise men" [10:14]). The repetition of this חכם root ties the subject of 10:13a to the subject of 10:14a. Both first stichs disclose the activity of the wise followed by forecasts of the destructive results of the fool's actions. The speech topic ("lips"/"mouth" + Character Quality ["discerning"/"fool"]) envelops the pair head to tail (10:13a, 14b).¹⁴ The 10:13–14 pair is linked to the 10:15–16 pair by the catchword "ruin" and a possible play on "hiding" or "treasuring." Perhaps a concatenous chaining relationship may best explain the sequencing here.¹⁵

Prov 10:15 begins another clear proverb pair which is united by the theme of wealth. Boström correctly observes the sound echo in the repetition of קר in 10:14b (קִרְבָּה) and 10:15a (קִרְיָה).¹⁶ The disparate themes of speech in 10:13–14 and wealth in 10:15–16 separate them into two distinct pairs.

Prov 10:15–16 is a good example of a non-catchword proverbial pair. Lexically, not a single word is repeated in this pair. This divergence is heightened by the presence of high frequency words "righteous"/"wicked" and many economic terms which could easily have led to repetition.¹⁷

Syntactically, all four stichs of 10:15 and 16 are verbless clauses. In v 15 the "Possessors" are characterized by their economic status ("rich"/"poor"), while in v 16 the "Possessors" are characterized by their moral character ("righteous"/"wicked").

Thematically, 10:15 and 16 are clearly economic in nature. In both sayings a positive evaluation of wealth is followed by a negative. V 15 comments on the inherent benefits of wealth and on the plight of the poor. Lest one value economic matters too highly, v 16 is juxtaposed to bring wealth back into the realm of morality.

¹⁴Syntactically both proverbs begin with a three constituent transitive clause followed by a verbless clause (2 constituents, 4 units). O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1980) 122, 138.

¹⁵Shalom Paul, "Amos 1:3–2:3: A Concatenous Literary Pattern," *JBL* 90 (1971) 402–3. Suggested by R. Van Leeuwen in correspondence (Nov. 7, 1988).

¹⁶Boström, *Paronomasi*, 123–24.

¹⁷Hildebrandt, "Proverbial Pairs," 214–15.

A significant catchword occurs in 10:17, as Murphy well notes.¹⁸ Clearly one of the syntactic structures which welds 10:16 together is the prepositional phrase featuring ל + Noun of life/destruction. When 10:17 picks up this exact prepositional phrase, surely it is not mere coincidence. Is this pair, then, really a triad? Thematically 10:15–16 and 17 are distinct. V 17 moves away from economics and employs traditional instruction vocabulary regarding the benefits of heeding discipline and the liabilities of forsaking correction. The lone instructional proverb in 10:17 appears to facilitate a transition back to the theme of speech in 10:18–21. As Prov 10:15 is linked to 10:14 via a catchword, so Prov 10:16 is linked to 10:17 by an explicit repetition of “to life.” Prov 10:17 marks the mid-point of this string (10:12–21).

Prov 10:18 reopens the proverbs on speech (cf. 10:13–14). This proverb exhibits what Akhmanova has called a phonestheme: “a recurrent combination of sound which is similar to the morpheme in the sense that a certain content or meaning is more or less clearly associated with it.”¹⁹ Phonetically, sibilants predominate, being repeated six times through various letters (ס, ש, ש, צ) thrice in initial positions. So sibilant sound is used to reinforce the message—allowing the audience to hear the hissing of the slanderer spreading his secrets.

In the 10:18–19 pair a semantic chiasm is observed:

10:18a	Hidden hatred	(A)
10:18b	Spread Slander	(B)
10:19a	Many words	(B)
10:19b	Few words	(A)

This is a complementary pair: one who holds his tongue is wise (10:19) except if it is for the purpose of deceptively covering hatred (cf. Prov 26:4–5). There may be a twofold sound link within the pair: (1) דב in word initial positions; and (2) trailing יל in final position. כס which heads 10:20 was also twice repeated in 10:18, once in initial position.

A final proverb pair (10:20–21) closes this string. The theme of the inherent value of righteous speech is made concrete by the observation that righteous lips feed many. The repetition and position of “righteous” + “Mouth part” and “heart” link the two proverbs into a pair. Boström notes the sound echo in נִבְחָר (10:20a) and חָסֵר (10:21b).²⁰ As

¹⁸R. Murphy, *Wisdom Literature*, 64ff.

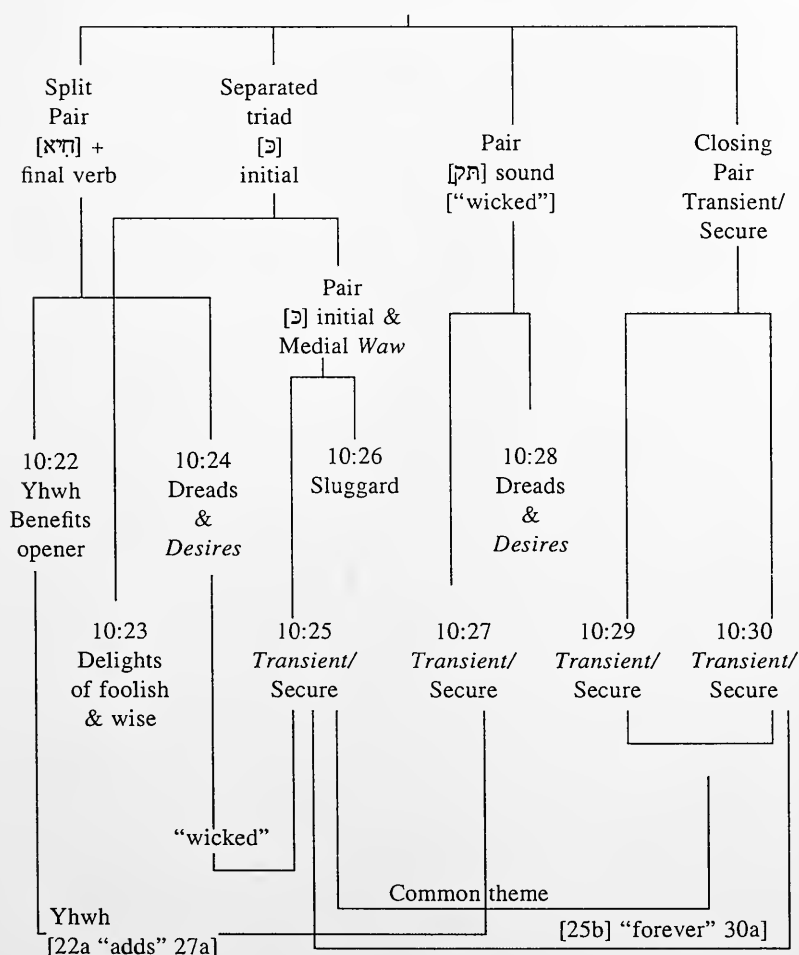
¹⁹Olga Akhmanova, *Linguostylistics: Theory and Method* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976) 23, 123, 125. E.g., “sl”-words: slither, slip, slimy, slide, slosh, sluggish, etc.).

²⁰Boström, *Paronomasi*, 125.

the final pair 10:10–11 concluded the second string by drawing strands of the previous pairs together (10:6–11) so, too, Prov 10:20–21 weaves together the two imbricating themes of this third string (speech [10:13–14; 10:18–19] and wealth [10:15–16] into a single concluding pair (10:20–21). The thematic shift between 10:21 and the Yahweh proverb in 10:22 indicates that a new string begins in 10:22, as outlined in the chart below.

Translation emphasizing features of cohesion:

STRING #4
Proverbs 10:22–10:30



Translation emphasizing features of cohesion:

- 10:22 The blessing of the *LORD* *she* brings wealth,
and he *adds* no trouble to it.
- 10:23 *Like* laughter *to a fool* is one doing wickedness
so is wisdom *to a man of understanding*.
- 10:24 The dreads of the *wicked she* overtakes him;
what the *righteous* desire will be granted.
- 10:25 *Like* a storm that blows by, *so* the *wicked* are gone,
but the *righteous* stand firm forever.
- 10:26 *Like* vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,
so is a sluggard *to those who send him*.
- 10:27 The fear of the *LORD* *adds* length to life,
but the *years of the wicked* are cut short.
- 10:28 The prospect of the righteous is joy,
but the *hopes of the wicked* come to nothing.
- Transient/Security Theme bound Pair
- 10:29 The way of the *LORD* is a refuge for the innocent
but it is the ruin of those who do evil.
- 10:30 The righteous will never be uprooted,
but the wicked will not remain in the land.

STRING #4: Prov 10:22–30

This fourth nine-verse string features an oscillating theme of transience and security (10:22–30). The difference in theme and the lack of lexical or phonetic links with the preceding verses call for a break between 10:21 and 22. Prov 10:22 (cf. 10:6) begins with “blessing.” The topically significant word “brings wealth” is also found in 10:4 and the wealth theme in 10:2–5 and 10:15–16. The initial ב + Hiphil verb (10:22b) is reminiscent of 10:2–3. Thus 10:22 makes a nice opener linking back to previous strings (10:1–5; 10:12–21).

The rare presence and medial first stich location of the feminine pronoun היא strongly points 10:22a down to 10:24a. Notice too the isomorphic syntactic structure of 10:22a and 24a (Subject:NP [“blessing of YHWH”/“dread of the wicked”] + Pronoun [3fs] + Verb [“brings wealth”/“overtakes”]). Prov 10:22 also makes a good structural divider because of its unique use of the divine name and non-antithetical parallelism.

Prov 10:23, linked via the initial ו is an example of a “separated triad” phenomena (10:23 and 25–26; cf. 15:1–2 and 4; 8–9 and 11;

20:16–17 and 20, 29–30 and 27). The bond with 10:26 is furthered by the ל + Noun which immediately follows the opening prepositional phrase. Prov 10:23 and 10:26 both close with final ל prepositional phrases. Once again the NIV violates these cohesive elements in translating 10:23.

Prov 10:24 is thematically diverse from 10:23. Prov 10:24 links to 10:22 through the rare first stich medial 3fs pronoun (אִתִּי) + verb sequence. Prov 10:22 and 10:24 appear to be a split pair (cf. 16:32/17:1; 17:26/18:5; and 18:23/19:1) with the separating verse 10:23 itself being linked downward in a “separated triad” scheme (10:23 and 25–26). The repetition of the “wicked” and “righteous” in 10:24 and 25 connects these two proverbs so 10:24 is not stranded.

With v 25 a clear proverb pair begins (10:25–26), linked not only by the initial ו and simile rhetorical device, but also by the first stich-medial waw—which is rare in these proverbs. The initial ו link should also be tied back to the detached 10:23.

Skehan and Brown err here as they call for a major division between 10:25 and 26 using a mechanical 25-verse division basis.²¹ Another indicator that a division should not come between 10:25 and the following proverbs is the close thematic link with Prov 10:29–30 concerning the transience of the wicked and the permanence of those having integrity. The shared “forever” (10:25, 30) also ties 10:25 into what follows. Further, thematic connections may also be seen in comparing 10:27 to 22 (Yahweh’s benefits) and 10:28 to 24 (desires/dreads). Note the detached pair (10:22, 24) is brought together in 10:27–28. The sluggard motif (10:26) is not found elsewhere in this string (cf. 10:4–5).

Prov 10:27–28 is a loose pair. Boström highlights the ש sequence as a sound link between 10:26 and 27 (שָׁנִית; שָׁשָׁן; שְׁנוֹת).²² This pair obviously echoes the initial verse of this string (10:22)—both in the presence of the divine name and in the use of shared verb “adds.”

Prov 10:27–28 are connected in three ways: (1) the repetition of the catchword “wicked” in the initial Subject:Noun Phrases of the second stichs; (2) the תָּק phonetic sequence in the second stich; and (3) syntactically 10:27b and 28b are isomorphic (Subject: NP + Verb: intransitive). Thematically, the desires/dreads of contrasting groups (“wicked”/“righteous”) ties back to 10:24, which is a further confirmation of Skehan’s sectional division at 10:25. While 10:27 and 28 share phonetic, lexical and syntactic features, they are thematically diverse.

The lack of thematic linking is made up for in the next proverbial pair (10:29–30), where both verses elaborate on the security/transience

²¹Brown, “Structured Parallelism,” 9. P. Skehan, “A Single Editor,” 25.

²²Boström, *Paronomasi*, 125.

of those having "integrity" [NIV:righteous]/"evil." This theme is consolidated from 10:25 and 10:27. The use of the divine name ties 10:29 to the preceding pair (10:27-28, cf. 10:22). "Ruin" reminds one of the 10:14-15 pair.

How does the section which began in 10:22 end? The section closes with a proverb pair (10:29-30) that draws together the theme of transience/security which has oscillated throughout this string (10:25, 27, 29-30).

Because of the lack of connection to the preceding string (10:22-30), and the catchword ties downward with 11:1 (רצונו), 10:31-32 is best constructed as beginning a new string.

CONCLUSION ON COHESION: PROVERBIAL STRINGS

It has been demonstrated that Prov 10:1-30 is composed of four proverbial strings (10:1-5; 10:6-11; 10:12-21; and 10:22-30). The **first string** (10:1-5) is divided into an opening, hinge proverb (10:1), two pairs on the topic of wealth (10:2-3, 4-5). The **second string** is composed of three pairs (10:6-7, 8-9, 10-11) that are structured by enveloping, whole-stich repetitions (10:6b/11b; 10:8b/10b) with the final pair (10:10-11) drawing together and closing the string. The **third string** (10:12-21) opens with a lone proverb hinge (10:12), followed by a pair about proper speech (10:13-14) concatenated with a pair on wealth (10:15-16). These two pairs are followed by a single proverb (10:17) which marks the middle of the string. The next pair (10:18-19) returns to the theme of speech and the section concludes with a pair drawing together the imbricating wealth and speech motifs (10:20-21). The **fourth string** (10:22-30) begins with a split pair (10:22, 24) followed by a separated triad (10:23, 25-26). The final two pairs (10:27-28; 29-30) highlight the themes of transience and security.

This paper has sought to explore the potentials of collectional analysis of the proverbial sentences which has led to the discovery of four proverbial strings in Proverbs 10. In order to appreciate the significance of each individual gem, the entire necklace must be viewed. As a necklace is more than a string of stones, so, too, the proverbial sentences need to be examined on the level of the collection as well as the sentential level. The discovery of cohesive "proverbial strings" in Proverbs 10 heightens our appreciation for the artistry of the canonical collectors.

Perhaps the collector(s), by the quick shifts of topic, is presenting the student with a picture of empirical reality.²³ This study suggests

²³J. Williams, *For Those Who Ponder Proverbs* (Sheffield: Almond, 1981) 70, 82. He writes, "aphoristic thought does not proceed systematically, but empirically. It directs itself to the fragments of experience as they occur, so that the mind is compelled to make its own connections among phenomena."

that rather than being distant to modern culture, this collection of proverbs is actually quite at home with the diversities of modern society, characterized by seeming fragmented commercials and instantaneous video switches of projected reality. Proverbs calls those seeking order, meaning and wholeness to its sayings leading those listening through the isolation, fragmentation and confusion of empirical reality to the crafted integration and wholeness of the fear of Yahweh.²⁴

²⁴Wolfgang Mieder and Barbara Mieder, "Tradition and Innovation: Proverbs in Advertising," in *The Wisdom of Many: Essays on the Proverbs* (NY: Garland, 1981) 309–22. This is an excellent article on the modern use of proverbs.

THE QUATRAIN IN ISAIANIC POETRY*

JOHN E. WORGUL

Isaiah was a master of Hebrew poetry as well as a grand theologian. He was fond of integrating couplets into various four-lined structures (i.e., quatrains) that fall into three basic categories. This integration was often achieved by sophisticated interplay on the grammatical, semantic, and rhetorical levels. What is of deeper significance, however, is that Isaiah used these poetic forms to enhance his theological meaning. By activating all levels of language, the prophet was able to impress God's word upon his hearers in compact, four-lined structures that would otherwise take many lines of prose to communicate.

* * *

ALTHOUGH the pairing of lines by means of grammatical, semantic and rhetorical parallelism to form couplets is the basic feature of Isaianic poetry, the pairing of couplets to form quatrains is also a distinctive device used by Isaiah.¹ In this article, we will differentiate and categorize these structures, but will also see how Isaiah uses them to communicate his message by artfully blending form with meaning.

Before we start with the analysis of the quatrains, some preliminary considerations are in order. Basic to the goal stated above is the position that a methodology of analyzing parallel lines must be able to account for both grammatical and semantic parallelism, and the rhetorical effect as well. It is our intention to avoid stressing one aspect of parallelism over another.² The method employed here, which was

*This article is based on the results of an analysis of 529 lines of Isaianic verse in my unpublished dissertation *Parallelism in the Poetry of Isaiah 1-18*, written for the Dropsie College, 1986.

¹Out of the 529 lines there were 208 units: 127 independent couplets, 42 quatrains, 29 triplets, 8 single lines and two possible hexastichs.

²See S. Geller, ("Theory and Method in the study of Biblical Poetry," *JQR* LXXIII No. 1 [1986]) 65-77. With regard to the debate over which aspect has primacy, A. Berlin's metaphor of grammar being the skeleton and semantics being the flesh and blood is helpful, for one is surely meaningless without the other. See A. Berlin, *The dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1985) 23-25, 64.

adapted from Stephen Geller's *Parallelism in Early Biblical Poetry* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1979) is an attempt to account for parallelism on these levels.³ Central to the method is a device called a "schema," which will be explained below.

The lines used in the analysis had to meet certain criteria.⁴ The first is that the lines analyzed should be regarded as Isaianic by most scholars.⁵ Secondly, the lines must be "highly parallelistic" as opposed to prose without any parallelistic features (e.g., 7:1-6, 10-17 and 8:1-4), or prose that contains parallelistic features, referred to here as "parallelistic prose" (e.g., 2:20, 3:6-7, 7:18-25, 8:12A-D and 10:10-12). What exactly constitutes "highly parallelistic" lines is a subject of ongoing debate. For our purposes we have delimited this category to lines that display a basic grammatical and semantic correspondence⁶ coupled with the limitation of line length,⁷ and the requirement that the parallel lines are relatively equal in length. The vast majority of Isaianic lines fall in this highly parallelistic category. Finally, the lines used had to be textually sound in the opinion of a consensus of scholars.⁸

Although the corpus was not subjected to a metrical analysis,⁹ certain patterns of line length emerged. The term "line pattern" denotes the ratio of grammatical units in one line to another. "Grammatical unit" is a term used to denote a word that is significant in the structure of parallel verse (i.e., words that are objects of parallelism). Some words, such as particles (e.g., וְ and מֵ) are not used as objects of parallelism in the corpus and are therefore not awarded the status of "grammatical unit."¹⁰ For example, a couplet with three grammatical units in each line would be referred to as a "3:3" line pattern. An example would be 17:10A-B:

³My debt to Stephen Geller is evident throughout this article.

⁴It was felt that a minimum of 500 lines would offer an adequate representation of Isaianic parallelism.

⁵Our corpus is based upon what S. R. Driver, O. Eissfeldt, G. Foher, G. B. Gray and J. Skinner, among others, unanimously considered to be Isaianic. This does not reflect the present writer's opinion of Isaianic authorship.

⁶This excludes, for example, 2:20, for although it can be divided into four fairly equal lines, they are all grammatically enjambed and semantically non-parallel.

⁷Or "terse," cf. J. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981) 85.

⁸The passages ultimately included were 1:2-27, 29-31, 2:7-8, 10-17, 19, 21, 3:1-5, 12C-26, 4:1, 5:1-28, 6:7B-D, 8B-C, 9-13B, 7:7B-9, 8:9-10, 13-15, 9:7-13, 15-17B, 19-20, 10:1-4, 6-9, 13-15, 17:1, 2B-C, 3A-B, 4-6, 10-14, 18:1-2D, 3-6.

⁹It is not denied that Isaianic poetry is "metrical" in some sense. Rather, an in-depth metrical analysis would confront many uncertainties which would require a major study of its own.

¹⁰See Geller, p. 8.

*Text of 17:10A-D**Translation*

- A. כִּי שָׁכַחַת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֶךָ For you have forgotten the God of
your salvation,
- B. וְצוּר מְצוֹנָךְ לֹא זָכַרְתָּ and the rock of your refuge you do
not remember.

In this couplet we see that each of the three basic grammatical units in the A line have a grammatical counterpart in the B line (verb: *שָׁכַחַת* // *לֹא זָכַרְתָּ* and a direct object with a noun in construct: *אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֶךָ* // *וְצוּר מְצוֹנָךְ*), which are semantically parallel as well (the verbs are synonymous and the direct objects are epithets in that they give description one to another). Here we should note that aside from a very few instances of grammatical rearrangement, often done for a rhetorical effect (e.g., 1:19–20 and 5:11 analyzed below) there is a basic grammatical and semantic correspondence between units in the parallel line structures in Isaiah.¹¹

Isaianic quatrains, like the couplets,¹² come in a variety of line patterns. Some, like 5:27A–D below, consist predominantly of lines with two grammatical units.¹³

*Text of 5:27A-D**Translation*

- A. אֵין עֵיֶר None is weary,
B. וְאֵין כּוֹשֵׁל בּוֹ none stumbles among them,
C. לֹא יָנוּם none slumbers,
D. וְלֹא יִישָׁן none sleeps.

It may be objected, of course, that what we have here is really a 5:4 couplet rather than a 2:3:2:2 quatrain.¹⁴ Granted that it is not always

¹¹However, see the few examples of the “semantic” quatrains below, which display semantic parallelism with little or no grammatical parallelism.

¹²Among the couplets alone there were 10 different line patterns: the 2:2, 2:3, 3:2, 3:3, 3:4, 4:3, 4:2, 4:4, 5:3 and the 5:2. Of these, the 3:3 and the 3:2 were the most common, but there were a significant number of “short lined” couplets (There were 27 occurrences of the 2:2. For example, see 1:23A–B, 2:10A–B, 5:3C–D, 7:9C–D, and 8:9C–D).

¹³Some other examples of quatrains with predominantly 2 unit lines are 1:18C–F, 1:19A–20B, 1:29A–D, 5:5C–F, 5:7E–H, 5:9B–E, 5:12D–G, 6:9B–E, 9:9A–D, 17:6C–G.

¹⁴The negative existential partial *אֵין* is considered a grammatical unit in the corpus since it functions as the predicate of a noun sentence throughout. The A line therefore consists of two grammatical units and the B line three units, for prepositions with suffixes (e.g., *בּוֹ* above) are often objects of parallelism in the corpus. The problem lies with the negative particle *לֹא*, which usually functions as a proclitic and forms a unit with the following term (hence not an independent grammatical unit, cf. *לֹא זָכַרְתָּ* in 17:10B above). In this instance, however, *לֹא* parallels *אֵין* on the semantic level and occupies the same emphatic position in the parallel line structure. It is therefore given a grammatical unit status in lines C and D.

easy to determine a couplet from a quatrain, two facts tend to discount understanding these lines as a couplet. First, long lines (i.e., lines with four or more units) without a caesura are relatively uncommon in Isaiah (see footnote 12 above). That is, Isaiah tends to use shorter three or two unit lines.¹⁵ Secondly there are clear grammatical caesuras that naturally break this text into four short, distinct phrases. Indeed, in this instance the brief, hurried line structure enhances Isaiah's description of these swift, relentless destroyers. As we shall see, this is not the only place where Isaiah uses form to enhance his meaning.

With this example we begin our study of the Isaianic quatrain. As we mentioned at the outset, the quatrain is essentially two couplets bound together. This "binding" is done in a variety of ways, and with the help of a continuum we can see that three basic quatrain patterns emerge. On one end of the continuum there is what we shall call the "interlocked" quatrains in which the two sets of paired lines are intertwined (hence "interlocked") in such a way that the quatrain must be viewed as one unit. This interlocking is the result of alternating or chiasmic patterns in which parallel lines are separated from each other (i.e., ABA'B', ABB'A').¹⁶ In the middle of the continuum there are the "integrated" quatrains. Here the parallelism is usually between the A and B lines and between the C and D lines, but it is obvious that all four lines are parallel on the basis of grammatical, semantic and usually rhetorical similarities (i.e., [A//A']/[A''//A''']). These structures are not considered to be as tightly bound as the "interlocked" types, for they can be analyzed as two couplets without obscuring the overall structure of the quatrain. Finally, at the end of the continuum we have the "semantic" quatrains in which, like the "integrated" quatrains above, the primary parallelism is between the A and B lines, and between the C and D lines, but the parallelism between the paired couplets is basically semantic and/or rhetorical, with no grammatical parallelism.¹⁷ Let us consider the tightest quatrains on the one end of the continuum, and proceed to the looser structures at the other end.

¹⁵Isaiah's use of the short, 2 unit line in couplets, triplets, and quatrains (often in association with 3 unit lines, e.g., a 3:2:2 triplet) is a characteristic that sets him apart from early Hebrew poetry. See Geller, pp. 282-84.

¹⁶That is, the A line parallels the C line and the B the D line in the alternating type, and the A line parallels the D line and the B the C line in the chiasmic type.

¹⁷This is a small category, for as noted above, Isaiah tends to employ lines that are parallel on both the grammatical and semantic levels. These quatrains are considered the "loosest" of the quatrains on the continuum because of the lack of grammatical parallelism. It should be emphasized again that grammar, although an important aspect of parallelism, is but one aspect, and the more aspects implemented (i.e., grammar, semantics, rhetorical devices), the "tighter" the parallelism. There are no examples of quatrains grammatically parallel with no semantic parallelism.

I. THE "INTERLOCKED" QUATRAIN:
ALTERNATING AND CHIASTIC STRUCTURES

Judging from the abundance of examples, the alternating quatrain must be considered a favorite Isaianic device.¹⁸ In half of the examples analyzed,¹⁹ the grammatical and semantic correspondence is complete between the alternating lines in that each unit, or group of units (i.e., word compounds) is grammatically and semantically parallel to its corresponding unit. To gain a clear and convenient view of the parallelism between these units, we employ what we term a "schema." This is a purely heuristic device intended to display syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures.²⁰ It merely arranges the syntax (syntagmatic/horizontal level) of the lines so that the parallel units can be placed vertically (paradigmatic level). By means of this device, one may observe at a glance the grammatical and semantic parallelism between the parallel lines. 1:10A-D will allow us to illustrate the use of the schema as well as offer an example of "complete" parallelism.

<i>Text of 1:10A-D</i>	<i>Translation</i>
A. שְׁמַעוּ דְּבַר־יְהוָה	Hear the word of YHWH
B. קִצְיֵי סֹדִם	you rulers of Sodom.
C. הִאֲזִינוּ תוֹרַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Listen to the teaching of our God,
D. עַם עֲמֹרָה	you people of Gomorrah.

Schema of 1:10A-D

A.	יְהוָה	דְּבַר	שְׁמַעוּ
B.			סֹדִם קִצְיֵי
C.	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	תוֹרַת	הִאֲזִינוּ
D.			עֲמֹרָה עַם

The imperatives and the direct objects of the A and C lines correspond grammatically and semantically (שְׁמַעוּ // הִאֲזִינוּ: synonyms, דְּבַר // תוֹרַת: synonyms, יְהוָה // אֱלֹהֵינוּ: epithet), as do the subjects in the B and

¹⁸See 1:10A-D, 1:15A-D, 1:18C-F, 1:19A-20B, 1:29A-D, 2:7A-D (a pentastich?), 5:5C-F, 5:7E-H, 5:9B-E, 5:10A-D, 5:11A-D, 5:12D-G, 6:9B-E, 9:9A-D, 17:6C-G, 17:12A-D.

¹⁹Cf. 1:10A-D, 1:19A-20B, 1:29A-D, 2:7A-D (a pentastich?), 5:5C-F, 5:12D-G, 6:9B-E, 9:9A-D.

²⁰Cf. S. Geller's "reconstructed sentence," pp. 15-21.

D lines (קָצִינִי // עַם: part-whole,²¹ סֹדִם // עֲמֹרָה: paradigmatic).²² The parallelism is therefore complete, and the quatrain, by virtue of the alternation (ABA'B'), must be considered as one unit of four lines, and cannot be analyzed as two couplets or as four single lines.²³ It is therefore a very tight quatrain.

In the other half of the examples of alternating quatrains, one finds that a word that is in one line (usually the A line) is deleted in its parallel line (C line), but is nevertheless understood in that line to complete its meaning. On a deeper level of linguistic analysis, however, this parallelism does not really differ from the complete parallelism in the example above, for the deleted word is necessary to the meaning of the line. This phenomenon of word deletion, referred to here as "ellipsis"²⁴ is illustrated by the quatrain in 5:7E-H.

<i>Text of 5:7E-H</i>	<i>Translation</i>
A. וַיִּקֹּר לְמִשְׁפָּט	and He looked for justice,
B. וְהִנֵּה מִשְׁפָּח	but behold, bloodshed;
C. לְצִדְקָה	for righteousness,
D. וְהִנֵּה צָעָקָה	but behold, a cry! ²⁵

Shema of 5:7E-H

A. וַיִּקֹּר לְמִשְׁפָּט	וַיִּקֹּר	
B.	מִשְׁפָּח	וְהִנֵּה
C. לְצִדְקָה		
D.	צָעָקָה	וְהִנֵּה

²¹The קָצִינִי may be considered a part of the whole (עַם), or the relationship between the two words may be described as a merism (i.e., establishing the two extremes "rulers" and "common people," and implying everyone in between).

²²Words related paradigmatically belong to the same semantic field in that they denote a common concept, or in other words, are related by an understood common denominator. In this example, the stock word pair סֹדִם and עֲמֹרָה belong to the same paradigm of "wicked cities."

²³The phenomenon of line parallelism, whether involving 2, 3, 4 or more lines, must be considered normative for Isaianic verse structure. This is so because the independent, single line is rare and its very existence is debatable (e.g., 1:15E; see footnote 1).

²⁴This phenomenon has also been referred to as "gapping." See E. L. Greenstein ("Two variations of Grammatical Parallelism in Canaanite Poetry and their Psycholinguistic Background," *JANES* of Columbia University, 6[1974]) 94.

²⁵This quatrain is primarily an alternating quatrain in that the A and C lines, and the B and D lines are grammatically identical and semantically parallel (even semantically identical in the repetition of וְהִנֵּה in the B and D lines). It is however, "integrated" as well in that the A and B lines, and the C and D lines are semantically and rhetorically parallel

It is obvious that הוֹי is understood with the prepositional phrase in the C line, for the C line would be incomplete without it. For all practical purposes, therefore, we must conclude that there is very little difference between the alternating quatrains with ellipsis and alternating quatrains that are “completely” parallel, for the grammatical and semantic parallelism is complete in both, even though one line may have an additional grammatical unit that its parallel line does not have.²⁶

Rarely, Isaiah may vary the grammar of one line to achieve a certain poetic effect. The quatrain in 5:11 illustrates this.

Text of 5:11A–D Translation

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---|
| A. | הוֹי מַשְׁכִּימִי בַבֶּקֶר | Woe! ²⁷ those who rise early in the morning, |
| B. | שָׁכַר יִרְדְּפוּ | that they may run after beer, ²⁸ |
| C. | מֵאַחֲרֵי בִנְשָׁף | who tarry late in the evening, |
| D. | יִין יִדְלִיקֵם | till wine inflames them. |

Schema of 5:11A–D

- | | | | |
|----|------|--------------|------------|
| A. | הוֹי | מַשְׁכִּימִי | בַּבֶּקֶר |
| B. | | שָׁכַר | יִרְדְּפוּ |
| C. | | מֵאַחֲרֵי | בִּנְשָׁף |
| D. | | יִין | יִדְלִיקֵם |

Apart from the interjection הוֹי, the A and C lines are grammatically identical (both having participles and prepositional phrases) and semantically parallel (merism). The הוֹי may be regarded as extrametrical and applying to the quatrain as a whole, or as a grammatical unit in the A line that is understood elliptically (i.e., “gapped”) in the C line.

by means of the paranomasia between מַשְׁפָּח and מַשְׁפֹּט, and צָדָקָה and צָעֲקָה (similar sound but opposite meaning).

²⁶Ellipsis can occur in any line structure whether they are couplets, triplets, or quatrains with other types of parallel line patterns.

²⁷The הוֹי (as opposed to אוֹי, which almost always occurs with prepositions לְ, עַל, or אֶל) is understood by this writer to be a pure interjection, most probably a cry of funerary lamentation (the nuance being “woe!” or “alas!” rather than “woe unto . . .”). Cf. H. W. Wolff, *A Commentary on the Prophets Joel and Amos* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) 242–45.

²⁸It is not evident how שָׁכַר differs from יִין. שָׁכַר almost always occurs paired with יִין and all but once precedes it. It probably is not liquor (usually translated “strong drink”), for there is no evidence of distillation in ancient times. Here it is understood to be a beer—perhaps a grain beer as opposed to wine. Cf. R. L. Harris, Ed., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980).

But what is of immediate interest is that the grammar of the D line is not what one would expect after having read the B line. The reader, having encountered a direct object and a transitive verb in the B line, is now surprised to find the noun as a subject in the D line. This probably was not done just for variation, but rather to set up a pun on the verb דלך. This root has a double meaning: that of “burn” or “inflamm” (cf. Ezek 24:10) and “hotly pursue” (cf. Gen 31:36). In this context, the primary meaning is no doubt “inflamm,” but it must not be overlooked that דלך (in the *Qal*) is a synonym of דרך in the B line, having the latter nuance of “pursuing.”²⁹ The pun is that the drinkers, making a fresh start in the morning and in full control (they are the subjects of יִדְּפוּ in the B line), are pursuing beer in the first couplet. However, by evening the situation is reversed. Wine is now in control (it is the subject of the D line) and is the pursuer in the second couplet. We see that the poet is actually combining grammar and line structure with the meaning (semantic nuances of דלך and the morning-evening merism) to impress an image upon his hearers of these ambitious fellows; they set out at the first light of dawn to make bold conquests of beer, but by evening they are stumbling their way back home with wine, the real victor in the contest, hard at their heels. By such synthesis, Isaiah is able to communicate a profoundly effective caricature in four short lines that would take many more lines of prose to describe.

The chiasmic quatrain is not so well represented as the alternating quatrain and must therefore be considered less characteristic of Isaianic quatrain devices. Out of the four possible examples (1:11C–F, 5:6A–D, 5:7A–D and 6:11B–C), there are no line structures as clear as the alternating line structures mentioned above. Be this as it may, the prophet will use chiasm as a device to tighten other types of quatrains. Perhaps the tightest quatrain in Isaiah is the famous one in 1:18:

<i>Text of 1:18C–F</i>	<i>Translation</i>
A. אִם־יְהִיוּ חַטָּאֵיכֶם כַּשָּׁנִים	If your sins are like scarlet,
B. כְּשֶׁלֶג יִלְבִּינוּ	shall they be white as snow?
C. אִם־יֵאָדְמוּ כְּתוֹלַעַ	If they are red like crimson,
D. כְּצֹמֶר יִהְיוּ	shall they become like wool?

²⁹On a deep level an underlying grammatical parallelism is evident if one rewrites the *Hiph* singular imperfect יִדְּלִיקֶם to the *Qal* plural imperfect יִדְּלִקוּ (dropping the 3 m pl suffix), with the second meaning of the verb's root “pursue” understood. Both the B and D lines would then have nouns functioning as subjects of plural imperfect verbs. For such grammatical “transformations,” see Geller, pp. 21–29.

Schema of 1:18C-F

A.	כְּשֵׁנִים	חֲטָאֵיכֶם	אִם-יִהְיֶה	
B.			יִלְבִּינוּ	כְּשֶׁלֶג
C.	כְּתוֹלַעַ	אִם-יִאֲדֹמֶה		
D.			יִהְיֶה	כְּצֶמֶר

This quatrain has a primarily alternating structure (note the ellipsis of חֲטָאֵיכֶם in the C line). However, chiasm can be observed on two levels. First, there is the chiasitic verb, prepositional phrase, prepositional phrase, verb structure within both the AB couplet and the CD couplet. The result is that the prepositional phrases take the central, or inside, position in the overall structure of the quatrain, while the verbs are at the extremities. Secondly, a further chiasm can be observed between the verb יִהְיֶה in the A and D lines, and the *Hiph* imperfects of the B and C lines. The inclusio of יִהְיֶה further tightens the quatrain. What must be determined at this point is whether or not this structure is in fact a vehicle to further the meaning of this quatrain. To begin with, we understand that the poet's intention is to offer a well-reasoned, or "tight" argument to the people (verse 18A: לְכוּ-נָא וְנוֹכַחָהּ). Certainly the skill in which he blends alternation with chiasm to produce such a tight structure enhances the meaning he wished to convey; that YHWH's terms are so tightly logical and reasonable that there is no room for objection. But can we go further and suggest that the form may even be valuable in the actual interpretation of this quatrain? It is well-known that the B and D lines can be understood either as statements (i.e., "they shall be white as snow/wool") or as questions, as in the above translation. The difficulty with the former interpretation is that it is not evident how or why red sins (sins of bloodshed, cf. verse 5) should become "white sins." Such an ambiguity in what one would expect to be a well-reasoned argument is out of place. Rather, it is more fitting in this context of tight logic to understand the B and D lines as rhetorical questions, expecting negative answers (cf. Jer 13:23).³⁰ Therefore, in presenting His argument, YHWH is backing the people into a corner by reminding them of their bloody guilt in crimes that cannot be left unpunished by law. Tightness of form mirrors inexorability of logical argument.

By itself therefore, this quatrain would leave the people with little comfort. However, this quatrain was never meant to be read by itself as

³⁰It is admissible that these lines be regarded as questions without interrogative pronouns or adverbs (see G-K 150 a).

is evident by its close similarities of structure with the next lines, which also form an alternating quatrain.

Text of 1:19A-B—20A-B

Translation

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. | אם-תֹּאבֹו וְשָׁמַעְתֶּם | If you are willing and obey, |
| B. | טוֹב הָאָרֶץ תֹּאכְלוּ | you will eat of the good of the land. |
| C. | וְאם-תִּמְאָנוּ וּמְרִיתֶם | But if you refuse and rebel, |
| D. | חֶרֶב תֹּאכְלוּ | you will be devoured by the sword. |

Schema of 1:19A-B—20A-B

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| A. | אם-תֹּאבֹו
וְשָׁמַעְתֶּם ³¹ | |
| B. | טוֹב הָאָרֶץ | תֹּאכְלוּ |
| C. | אם-תִּמְאָנוּ
וּמְרִיתֶם | |
| D. | חֶרֶב | תֹּאכְלוּ |

The continuation of the particle אם and the similar “outside” position of the imperfect verbs with the alliterative ת / א combination (rhetorical considerations) forces the reader to connect the two quatrains on the semantic level (i.e., meaning) as well. Indeed, this quatrain brings us into the second phase of YHWH’s argument. In spite of their guilt, if they are willing and obey, then they shall eat the good of the land. The alliteration and assonance between תֹּאבֹו and טוֹב further strengthens the reasonableness and attractiveness of a willing heart toward God. However, if they refuse and rebel, then they shall be “the eaten” rather than “the eaters.” With this pun between תֹּאכְלוּ and תִּמְאָנוּ,³² which occupies the final position in this two quatrain unit, we reach the peak of YHWH’s argument. As in the case of 5:11 analyzed above,

³¹Note that two grammatical units are parallel within the same line (i.e., “internal parallelism”) and are placed in the same column of the schema.

³²The תֹּאכְלוּ of the D line is most probably a *Qal* passive (see G-K 52 e). Usually, חֶרֶב is understood prepositionally either by reading בַּחֶרֶב (cf. IQIs^a) or by considering it as an accusative functioning prepositionally in a passive construction (for details see G-K 121 c). Some prefer to emend the verb to תֹּאכְלוּ (you shall eat the sword), but this has no versional support and is not idiomatic to Hebrew which would prefer the חֶרֶב as the subject (cf. 2 Kgdms 2:26, 18:8 and Jer 2:30). Others emend to חֲרוֹב which means “carob” (a poor man’s food) in late Hebrew and Aramaic, but this word is not used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible and such a reading involves the emendation of the passive verb as well as חֶרֶב. However, it is possible that Isaiah was making a pun on חֶרֶב and חֲרוֹב.

Isaiah altered the grammar of the D line to achieve this pun. One would expect תִּאָכְלוּ rather than the passive תִּאָכַל to parallel the תִּאָכְלוּ of the B line, with תִּרְכֵּב, a direct object, paralleling טוֹב הָאָרֶץ. By reversing the expected grammar (i.e., active to passive) the alternative of eating rather than being eaten is underscored. The tightness of the two quatrain unit is further enhanced by the inclusio of the יִהְיֶה יְאִמֵּר and the יִהְיֶה דִּבָּר of the 20C line.

The “interlocked” quatrain is an important Isaianic poetic device. Most characteristic of it is the alternating quatrain (ABA'B'; 16 clear examples in the corpus), although there is evidence of chiasmic structures (4 possible examples), and at times a mixture of both. Also there is a basic grammatical and semantic correspondence between word units of the parallel lines in spite of ellipsis and an occasional grammatical rearrangement. Often, Isaiah will use this “interlocked” structure, along with grammatical and rhetorical forms, to enhance the meaning of his oracle.

II. THE “INTEGRATED” QUATRAIN

The combination of couplets whose parallel lines are not actually intertwined but are associated by virtue of grammatical, semantic and often rhetorical parallelism is common in Isaiah.³³ Usually, all four lines are grammatically and semantically parallel, although in a few instances one line, either the A line or the D line, is non-parallel (A line: 1:18A-D, 1:14A-D, 10:8A-9C; D line: 17:5A-D). These quatrains occupy the center of the continuum, for they are somewhat less bound than the “interlocked” type in that the primary parallelism is often between the A and B lines, and between the C and D lines. (They therefore could be analyzed as two couplets without blurring the overall structure, unlike the alternating quatrains.) The oft analyzed quatrain in 1:3 illustrates this type.³⁴

<i>Text of 1:3A-D</i>	<i>Translation</i>
A. יָדַע שׁוֹר קִנְיָהּ	The ox knows its owner,
B. וְחֲמֹר אֲבוֹס בְּעָלָיו	and the ass its master's crib,
C. יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יָדַע	(but) Israel does not know,
D. עַמִּי לֹא הִתְבּוֹנֵן	my people do not understand.

³³There are at least 15 clear examples of this in my corpus: 1:3A-D, 1:4A-D, 1:7A-D, 1:8A-D, 1:14A-D, 3:3A-D (list), 3:16C-F, 3:24A-D, 5:27A-D, 7:8, 7:9, 8:9A-D, 8:13A-D, 10:3A-D, 10:8A-9C, 10:14A-D, 10:15A-D?, 17:5A-D, 17:10A-D?

³⁴Cf. J. Kugel's treatment of this quatrain in *Idea*, 9.

Schema of 1:3A-D

A.	קָנְהוּ	שׁוֹר	יָדַע
B.	אֲבוֹס בְּעָלָיו	וְחִמּוֹר	
C.		יִשְׂרָאֵל	לֹא יָדַע
D.		עָמִי	לֹא הִתְבוֹנֵן

On the surface, the primary grammatical and semantic parallelism is between the A and B lines, and between the C and D lines. In the AB couplet, both lines have direct objects (שׁוֹר and חִמּוֹר) that are semantically parallel (both are farm animals). In the CD couplet, both lines have negatives with verbs (יָדַע and לֹא יָדַע) that are semantically parallel (both express Israel's lack of knowledge). All four lines are grammatically parallel in spite of the fact that not all elements (i.e., verb, subject, direct object) are in each of the four lines except the A line. However, below the surface, we see that grammar, semantics and rhetorical devices all contribute to give a deeper perception of Israel's condition. What Isaiah has done was to make use of the simple form of a quatrain to create a rather complex message that unfolds when one examines the similarities and contrasts between the grammatical units of the parallel lines. To begin with, it will be noticed that all four lines have a subject which associates senseless beasts (the subjects of the AB couplet) with Israel (the subject of the CD couplet) on the semantic level. The similarity between the beasts and Israel is further strengthened on the phonetic level by the alliteration of the sibilants שׁ / שׁ and the ר in שׁוֹר and יִשְׂרָאֵל, and the gutturals ח / ע with the מ in חִמּוֹר and עָמִי. However, one is encouraged not to stop at this unflattering association, for one is invited to contemplate the contrasts as well as the similarities. But what is the basic contrast between these beasts and Israel? Is it that the beasts are instinctively faithful to their benefactors as opposed to Israel's infidelity?³⁵ Although יָדַע has a broad semantic range that includes knowledge on the emotional and volitional levels (and therefore associated with obedience and piety) as well as on the intellectual level, its parallel is with הִתְבוֹנֵן, which clearly implies actual knowledge or perception derived from examination. Moreover, the contrast between Israel and these domesticated beasts demands that intelligence, rather than faithfulness, is the issue, for oxen, as far as we can tell, were known for their fidelity, loyalty and obedience.³⁶ Since oxen are relatively uncommon to the experience of many western

³⁵J. Skinner, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Chapters I-XXXIX* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1925) 4.

³⁶In contrast to the יָרִים (wild ox) that is not dependable like the domesticated ox (see Job 39:9-12).

urbanites, perhaps Lassie would offer us a more vivid image. One would not say: "even Lassie is faithful to his master, he knows his doggie dish." The comparison with Lassie implies that the real issue is not Lassie's fidelity, but intelligence. The point in our passage is that even dumb (although faithful) beasts are intelligent enough to know something that Israel doesn't know. But what could this be? Surely it cannot be ignorance of God's raising them and that Israel has rewarded Him by rebelling (verse 2), for the prophets assumed that Israel was aware of their special status with YHWH and their responsibility to Him. Rather, a moral ignorance is implied, not of their crimes, but of the consequences of their crimes, that is, punishment. This is not explicit in the text, but is implicit in the dynamics of the parallelism.³⁷

The beasts possess a certain cunning with regard to their welfare that Israel lacks. They are fed not because they are loyal, but they are loyal because they are fed. What they know is the price of disobedience. The negatives of the D and C lines add a new dimension to Israel's ignorance of their fate. They do not know what the animals know because they *will not* know it. Their ignorance is a willful ignorance. The stupidity of such an ignorance is grammatically and structurally enhanced by the conspicuously missing direct objects in the CD couplet. The animals are fed for their simple logic, for their knowledge has an object (their master and his food trough). Israel, by its willful ignorance, has no object of knowledge and will soon starve (i.e., suffer punishment). That Israel is foolish in regard to the consequences of her crime is a standard prophetic argument (cf. Deut 32:6 "עַם נֶכֶל וְלֹא חָכָם").

Another example of this type of quatrain is found in 3:16, where Isaiah is scathing in his description of the daughters of Zion.

<i>Text of 3:16C-F</i>	<i>Translation</i>
A. וַתֵּלְכֶנָּה נְטוּת גְּרוֹן	and they walk with outstretched necks,
B. וּמִשְׁקָרוֹת עֵינֵיהֶם	and ogle with their eyes,
C. הִלּוּךְ וְטַפֵּף תֵּלְכֶנָּה	mincing along as they go,
D. וּבְרִגְלֵיהֶם תִּעֲכָכְסֶנָּה ³⁸	tinkling with their feet.

³⁷The fact that the overall context of Isaiah 1 is that of a רִיב (pronounced "rēv"; it is the term given for a legal law suit) intensifies the expectation of judgement in this quatrain.

³⁸In spite of the fact that there are three instances of *hapax legomena* in this quatrain, the precise definitions of which may not be known, our analysis is not adversely affected, for the context of these attention getting actions helps to provide close enough definitions. The *Pi* of the root שָׁקַר refers to some bawdy, wanton look, unless with Jastrow we understand it to mean "paint" (cf. שָׁקַר II, *Pi*). The infinitive of טַפַּף may be onomatopoeic, related to the little steps taken by children (i.e., "tap," cf. Gray). The *Pi* of עָכַס denotes something done with the feet which must be related to some sort of article which makes noise or draws attention (cf. v. 18 for the noun form).

Schema of 3:16C-F

- A. נְטוּת גְרוֹן וְתִלְכָּנָה
- B. וּמִשְׁקָרוֹת עֵינַיִם
- C. הַלּוֹךְ וְטַפֵּף תִּלְכָּנָה
- D. וּבְרָגְלֵיהֶם תַּעֲצֹסְנָה

All four lines are grammatically and semantically parallel. The imperfects of הֵלֵךְ, although actually occurring in the A and C lines, are “gapped” in the B and D lines as well. Each line contains a “compound,” or a unit consisting of two inseparable words, that modify the הֵלֵךְ imperfects: the A and B lines have participles in construct, the C line has a compound of two infinitive absolutes, and the D line contains a preposition with a verb. These compound modifiers, which describe actions while walking, are basically interchangeable grammatically and semantically. What is unique about this quatrain of four parallel lines, however, is the way in which Isaiah blends alternation and chiasm into his overall structure.

Text of 3:16C-F with Couplets Placed on Same line

וּמִשְׁקָרוֹת עֵינַיִם / וְתִלְכָּנָה נְטוּת גְרוֹן
 וּבְרָגְלֵיהֶם תַּעֲצֹסְנָה / הַלּוֹךְ וְטַפֵּף תִּלְכָּנָה

We see that there is a special relationship between the A and C lines and between the B and D lines (alternation), and this relationship is chiasmic in nature. The imperfects of הֵלֵךְ are obviously parallel, as are the indivisible compounds נְטוּת גְרוֹן (extended necks) and הַלּוֹךְ וְטַפֵּף (mincing along), which are parallel adverbially on a higher level. (Note the assonance of the long *ū* vowels that further associates these compounds.) Likewise, the participle וּמִשְׁקָרוֹת and the verb תַּעֲצֹסְנָה (“ogling” and “tinkling”) describe similar actions, and the attention getting עֵינַיִם (eyes) and וּבְרָגְלֵיהֶם (feet) are also parallel. This complex structure which consists of parallel body parts and simultaneous actions helps to enhance our mental picture of these women skilled in the art of seduction. It should be noted that the use of alternation and chiasm within a quatrain of four parallel lines places this “integrated” quatrain very close to the “interlocked” quatrains on the continuum.

An example of an “integrated” quatrain that is positioned toward the other end of the continuum (i.e., the “loose” end where there is no grammatical parallelism) is the structure found in 10:15.

Text of 10:15A–D

- A. הִתְפָּאֵר הַגֶּרֶן עַל הַחֶצֶב בּוֹ
 B. אִם יִתְגַּדֵּל הַמִּשּׁוֹר³⁹ עַל מְנִיפּוֹ
 C. כִּהְנִיף שֶׁבֶת וְאַתְּ (מְרִימוֹ)⁴⁰
 D. כִּהְרִים מִטָּה לֹא־עֵץ

Translation

- A. Shall the axe boast itself over him who hews with it?
 B. Shall the saw exalt itself over him who wields it?
 C. As if a rod should wield him who lifts it,
 D. as if a staff should lift him who is not wood.

Semantic Diagram of 10:15A–D

- A. a b c
 B. a' b' c'
 C. a'' b'' c''
 D. a''' b''' c'''

The grammatical parallelism is very exact within the AB couplet in that both lines have an interrogative particle, a *Hitpa^cel* intransitive verb, a subject and a prepositional phrase. The grammatical parallelism within the CD couplet is also exact in that both lines are prepositional phrases containing an infinitive construct, a subject and a direct object. Although there is a certain compatibility between these two couplets (i.e., the verbal element in the infinite constructs of the CD couplet with the intransitive verbs of the AB couplet: the parallel subjects), it is evident that the grammatical parallelism is weak. Rather, the emphasis of this quatrain is on the semantic parallelism, for every word on each line is semantically parallel, as the semantic diagram shows (using the standard a b c // a' b' c' method).

The “integrated” quatrains are better thought of as two couplets that are connected grammatically, semantically and usually rhetorically.

³⁹*מִשּׁוֹר* is a *hapax*, the root of which is *נִשַּׁר* which has the meaning “saw” in various Semitic languages.

⁴⁰If the ך on the direct object marker (וְאַתְּ) is original, it may be explained as a *waw explicativum* (see G–K 154 a N 1b). It is believed by many that the plural *מְרִימֵי* was subsequently added to make the reference to YHWH more clear (i.e., the “plural of majesty,” cf. Gray, p. 202; G–K 124 k; note also the singular in the versions).

Some, like the 3:16 quatrain analyzed above, are structurally and grammatically “tighter” than others of its class (e.g., 10:15 above) and are therefore closer to the “interlocked” end of the continuum. We now consider the “semantic” quatrains at the “loose” end of the continuum.

III. THE “SEMANTIC” QUATRAIN

There are fewer instances in which the connection between the two couplets is completely semantic and/or rhetorical, resulting in correspondingly looser relationships.⁴¹ 18:6A–D provides an example.

Text of 18:6A–D

- A. יַעֲזֹבוּ יַחְדָּו לְעֵיט הָרִים
- B. וּלְבֵהֶמַת הָאָרֶץ
- C. וְקָץ עָלֵיו הָעֵיט
- D. וְכָל־בֵּהֶמַת הָאָרֶץ עָלֵיו תִּתְחַרֵּף

Translation

- A. They shall all be left to the birds of prey of the mountains,
- B. and to the beasts of the earth;
- C. and the birds of prey will spend the winter on them,
- D. and the beasts of the earth will spend the harvest on them.⁴²

There is no grammatical parallelism between the AB couplet and the CD couplet. The result is that the attention of the reader is automatically drawn away from the comparison of lines and repetitive grammatical units between couplets, which sets this quatrain apart from the interlocked and integrated types. Rather, the reader is drawn to a more general comparison of the two couplets on the semantic level, and upon examination, it is evident that the CD couplet explains in more detail the meaning of the AB couplet (general-specific relationship). The repetition of “birds of the mountains” and “beasts of the earth” is purely semantic (i.e., they are prepositions in the AB couplet, but subjects in the CD couplet). The quatrain is therefore categorized as “semantic.” It should be noted that rhetorical features such as alternation (A and C lines—birds; B and D lines—beasts; note also the

⁴¹There are four examples in the corpus: 1:6C–F, 1:13A–D, 1:31A–D, and 18:6A–D.

⁴²The verbal denominatives קָץ and תִּתְחַרֵּף occur only here. To remain consistent with the vine metaphor in the preceding verses 4 and 5, it is understood here that the ruined vines (i.e., the Ethiopians) will become a barren haunt of wild birds and beasts year around, rather than become carrion for these creatures.

chiasm in the CD couplet—summer, birds, beasts, winter), and alliteration (the profusion of gutturals throughout all four lines) serve to strengthen the connection between these two couplets.

Finally, at the end of the continuum is an interesting example in which two couplets form a somewhat loose quatrain primarily on the rhetorical level.

<i>Text of 1:6C-F</i>	<i>Translation</i>
A. פָּצַע וְחִבּוּרָה	(but) bruises and blows,
B. וּמָכָה טָרִיָּה ⁴³	and raw wounds;
C. לֹא זָרוּ וְלֹא חֲבָשׁוּ	they are not pressed out, nor bound up,
D. וְלֹא רִכְכָּה בַּשָּׁמֶן	nor softened with oil.

Schema of 1:6C-F (so as to show the rhetorical structure)

A.	וְחִבּוּרָה	פָּצַע
B.	וּמָכָה טָרִיָּה	
C.	לֹא זָרוּ	וְלֹא חֲבָשׁוּ
D.	וְלֹא רִכְכָּה בַּשָּׁמֶן	

The AB couplet and the CD couplet are essentially two lists placed together. Each list contains three elements, two of which are internal in the first lines of their respective couplets (i.e., internal parallelism in the A and C lines). The two lists are not grammatically parallel to each other in that the first consists of nouns while the second consists of verbal phrases. Only secondarily are the two couplets semantically parallel (i.e., general-specific relationship: the CD couplet gives more information on the AB couplet). Rather, the primary parallelism is structural and phonetic. Structurally, as already noted, these two couplets are lists, and these lists are of increasing length. That is, the first unit of both couplets is the shortest (פָּצַע and זָרוּ). The second is a bit larger (וְחִבּוּרָה and וְלֹא חֲבָשׁוּ). The third is the largest and most grammatically involved (וּמָכָה טָרִיָּה and וְלֹא רִכְכָּה בַּשָּׁמֶן). Corresponding to this increasing unit length is a semantic progression, most evident in the last line of each couplet where the picture is made more vivid by the adjective and adverb (i.e., raw, open, hardening wounds). Phonology also serves to connect the corresponding units of these two couplets (the צ of פָּצַע and the ז of זָרוּ are both sibilants; the ח, ב sequence in

⁴³The attributive is used elsewhere only in Judg 15:15, where it modifies “jawbone” (i.e., a fresh jawbone rather than an old, brittle one). Here the idea is “newly opened” or “raw.” Note the use of collective singulars in the AB couplet.

חֲכָשׁוּ and וְחִבּוּרָה; the doubled כּ in מַכָּה and רִפְּקָה together with the כָּ endings). These obvious rhetorical features are not only the main ingredients that hold this quatrain together structurally, but also intensify the meaning. Israel has untended bruises that are not pressed out, blows that are not bound up, and raw wounds that are not softened with oil. The increasing unit length underscores the semantic progression that describes an infection that is progressing beyond a cure.

CONCLUSION

Although this study is not based on a complete analysis of all of Isaiah's material, we can nevertheless observe certain features of the Isaianic quatrain emerging. First of all, we may ascertain the different types of couplet combinations he employs, and gain a general idea of the frequency of these types. Making use of the continuum, we noticed that at one end the "interlocked" quatrain, most usually of the alternating type rather than the chiasitic, was the most highly represented in the corpus with 20 examples. The parallel lines of these quatrains are so structurally intertwined that they cannot be analyzed in smaller units (i.e., couplets). Toward the middle of the continuum there are the "integrated" quatrains in which the primary parallelism is between the A and B lines, and between the C and D lines, but both couplets are nevertheless tightly joined on the basis of grammar, semantic, and rhetorical parallelism. This group is also well represented with 15 examples. Finally, there are only a few examples where the grammatical parallelism breaks down completely, producing "semantic" quatrains that are connected only by semantic and/or rhetorical parallelism, at the very end of the continuum.

Secondly, and perhaps more important than the categorization of these structures, is the fact that Isaiah frequently uses these structures, along with grammar, semantics, and rhetorical devices to enhance his meaning. Isaiah's genius as a poet and theologian lies in the sophisticated interplay of all these aspects. By means of such art he is able to impress upon the mind of his hearers in a few short parallel lines (in our case, the four lines that make up the quatrain) concepts and images that would take paragraphs of ordinary prose to express. Ultimately, this compactness is the result of parallelism that activates all levels of language, melding together form and meaning.⁴⁵

⁴⁴זָרָה (note the long ִ vowel) is best explained as a *Qal* passive of זָרָה, a *hapax* with the meaning of "pressing out" (i.e., a wound, cf. G-K 67 m).

⁴⁵R. Jakobson, "Grammatical Parallelism and its Russian Facet," *Language* 42 (1966) 399-429.

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF COLOSSIANS 2:16-3:17

GREGORY T. CHRISTOPHER

A discourse analysis of Colossians 2:16-3:17 has led to three conclusions. First, this section forms a discourse unit (specifically, hortatory discourse with embedded expository discourse). Second, the structural framework is a chiasmus. Its functions are to provide the structural rubric around which the argument develops and to provide cohesion which holds the book together. And third, the argument of this section builds to a climax, identified with the imperative, "Put on" (3:12). Specific text-based features (change in tense and person associated with the imperatives, change in word order, and use/nonuse of the vocative) point to these conclusions.

* * *

INTRODUCTION

Jan de Waard and Eugene Nida note that translation is essentially interpretation.¹ Translators, and by extension, interpreters, should not only be concerned about content, but concern should also extend to rhetorical impact and appeal and to rhetorical structure and meaning. Translators/interpreters must recognize patterns of selection and arrangement. Such concerns go beyond sentence level syntax, in that rhetorical structures are normally large patterns and less rigidly rule-governed. These structures are features of discourse.²

The focus of this paper is the discourse structure of Colossians 2:16-3:17. The structural framework is a chiasmus which serves a dual purpose. The chiasmus provides the cohesion which holds the book together. And it provides the structural rubric around which the argument of Colossians 2:16-3:17 develops to a climax.

¹I would like to thank Robert Longacre and Daniel Wallace for their critical comments. The content of this paper, however, is the author's responsibility.

²Jan de Waard and Eugene A. Nida, *From One Language to Another* (Nashville: Nelson, 1987) 40, 79. 80.

Before outlining the chiasmic structure, the method which underlies this paper is summarized. The basis for the claims is discourse grammar.³

METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

In a paper entitled, "Why We Need a Vertical Revolution in Linguistics," Robert Longacre outlines features of language for which sentence level grammars are unable to account.⁴ Discourse grammarians claim that sentence level grammars are unable to describe information structure, and therefore, are unable to fully account for the dynamics of language.⁵ Part of the problem is that English speakers are generally unaware of discourse features.⁶

Information structure consists of several levels. For the purposes of this paper, two levels are outlined. The first level is main-line verbs of discourse. The second level is discourse peak.

Main-line Verbs of Discourse

Not all information is of equal value. Some information is salient and carries the discourse forward to its climax, while other information is supportive. This distinction is marked by a specific tense-aspect-mood. Salient information is marked by a main-line verb while supportive information is marked by verbs which progressively depart from the main-line. Longacre explains:

³One should not equate discourse grammar with structuralism, though some overlap might exist. Daniel Patte illustrates the latter ("Method for a Structural Exegesis of Didactic Discourse: Analysis of I Thessalonians," *Semeia* 26 [1983] 85-129). For a critique of structuralism, see Bill Stancil, "Structuralism and New Testament Studies," *SWJT* 22 (1980) 41-59. Longacre's discourse grammar is independent of (European) structuralism (personal communication).

⁴Robert Longacre, "Why We Need a Vertical Revolution in Linguistics," *The Fifth LACUS Forum* (Columbia, SC: Hornbeam, 1978) 247-70.

⁵Take, for example, the work of Henk van Riemsdijk and Edwin Williams. Their research focus are sentences. At the same time they recognize limitations to such a research program. They concede, "In principle it could turn out that it is impossible to characterize sentences in and of themselves without reference to their roles in various conversations" (*Introduction to the Theory of Grammar* [Cambridge: MIT, 1986] 184).

⁶James Gee notes that "English is particularly impoverished in discourse particles and other formal discourse markers" ("Units in the Production of Narrative Discourse," *Discourse Processes* 9 [1983] 392). This puts speakers of English at a disadvantage vis-à-vis discourse analysis, in that we are unaware of such features and consequently fail to search for them in language analysis. Discourse analysts such as Longacre correct this disadvantage. Their exposure to languages makes them aware of language dynamics in general and discourse strategies in particular.

Discourse grammarians are coming to recognize more and more that in telling a story in any language, one particular tense is favored as the carrier of the backbone or story-line of the story while other tenses serve to present the background, supportive, and predictive material in the story.⁷

To illustrate these distinctions, note Longacre's discussion of Hebrew narrative and hortatory discourse. Each discourse type has its own constellation of verb forms (what Longacre calls salience scheme). Chart 1 illustrates Hebrew narrative, while Chart 2 illustrates Hebrew hortatory discourse.⁸

The preterite (*waw*-consecutive) marks the main-line in Hebrew narrative, a chain of (necessary verb-initial clauses). Supportive information is scalar, moving from action (Band 2), to static verbs (Band 4), to irrealis (Band 5).

Band 1 Storyline	1. Preterite
Band 2 Backgrounded Actions	2.1 Perfect 2.2 Noun + Perfect
Band 3 Backgrounded Activities	3.1 <i>hinnen</i> + participle 3.2 Participle 3.3 Noun + participle
Band 4 Setting	4.1 Preterite of <i>haya</i> , "be" 4.2 Perfect of <i>haya</i> , "be" 4.3 Nominal clause (verbless) 4.4 Existential clause with <i>yesh</i>
Band 5 Irrealis	5. Negation of verb clause

Chart 1
Hebrew Verb Rank Scheme for Narrative Discourse
Used with permission

Note the differences between narrative and hortatory discourse (see Chart 2). Preterite marks main-line of narrative while the main-line of hortatory discourse is the imperative. Supportive information is also scalar.

⁷Robert Longacre, *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns) 64.

⁸Longacre, *Joseph*, 81, 121.

Band 1	1.1 Imperative (2pl)
Primary line of	1.2 Cohortative (1pl)
Exhortation	1.3 Jussive (3pl)
Band 2	2.1 'al' + jussive/imperfect
Secondary line	2.2 Modal imperfect
of exhortation	
Band 3	3.1 waw-(consecutive) perfect
Results/consequences	3.2 lo'/pen + imperfect
(Motivation)	3.3 (Future) perfect
Band 4	4.1 Perfect (of past events)
Setting (or problem)	4.2 Participles
	4.3 Nominal clauses

Chart 2

Hebrew Verb Rank Scheme for Hortatory Discourse Used with permission

Identification of main-line verbs is important. First, main-line verbs are textual clues as to salient versus supportive information. Main-line verbs carry the discourse forward. Second, main-line versus supportive verbs serve to identify paragraph structure.⁹ Third, altering the main-line can mark discourse peak or climax (see next section). And fourth, abstraction of macrostructure is related to verb ranking. Macrostructure is essentially the overall plan or design of a discourse.¹⁰

Discourse Peak

The second level of information relative to this paper is discourse peak. The assumption here is that a discourse "is going somewhere in terms of its inner drive and development."¹¹ There is movement toward a conclusion. An interpreter's goal, then, is to retrace an author's progression of thought (being conscious of the main-line), a progression which builds to the conclusion or discourse peak. In narrative, for example, peak may be maximum tension (climax) or a crucial event that provides a resolution to a plot (*denouement*). The peak of hortatory discourse is the most effective attempt to change behavior. Longacre calls this progression the profile of a text, i.e., linguistic reflexes of mounting and declining tension.¹²

⁹For a complete discussion, see Longacre, *Joseph*, 83–118.

¹⁰Longacre, *Joseph*, 42. See also Teun van Dijk, *Text and Context* (London: Longmans, 1977).

¹¹Robert Longacre, "Discourse Peak as Zone of Turbulence," *Beyond the Sentence* (Ed. J. Wirth; Ann Arbor: Karoma, 1985) 84.

¹²Robert Longacre, "A Spectrum and Profile Approach to Discourse Analysis," *Text* 1 (1981) 337.

Longacre describes discourse peak as a "zone of turbulence in otherwise placid flow of discourse."¹³ Changes from the "routine" within a discourse serve as cues to mark the progression of a discourse. Longacre explains that languages possess a number of possible strategies to mark discourse peak. These strategies vary across languages. Essentially the regular flow of the discourse is altered at peak. A given discourse may employ one or several strategies. Such strategies may include rhetorical underlying (e.g., paraphrase), change in word order, discourse peak particle, change of tense-aspect-mood, change of sentence length, al.¹⁴ The underlying assumption is that variation is not random nor arbitrary.¹⁵

The identification of discourse peak is important. Longacre explains:

The importance of the identification of peak is that it enables us to get at the overall grammar of the discourse. If we can identify a discourse peak, then we can identify pre-peak and post-peak sections. These, plus special beginning and ending sections, give us a surface grammar of discourse that is not dissimilar from the recognition of subject, verb, and object on the clause level in a language. The verb as a central constituent of the clause can be compared with the peak as a central constituent of the discourse.¹⁶

A critical part of understanding a discourse (or a section of a discourse), then, is the identification of the conclusion or discourse peak. This paper will illustrate the importance of this concept in terms of Colossians 2:16–3:17.

Summary

The method which underlies the interpretive conclusions of this paper is discourse grammar as developed by Robert Longacre. The

¹³Longacre, "A Spectrum and Profile," 351.

¹⁴Longacre, "Discourse Peak as Zone of Turbulence," 84–86; "A Spectrum and Profile," 349–51.

¹⁵Longacre, *Joseph*, xiii.

¹⁶Longacre, *Joseph*, 97. Paul Ricoeur's comment about the conclusion of a story is relative here. He writes: "To follow a story is to move forward in the midst of contingencies and peripeteia under the guidance of an expectation that finds its fulfillment in the 'conclusion' of the story. This conclusion is not logically implied by some previous premises. It gives the story an 'end point,' which, in turn, furnishes the *point of view* from which the story can be perceived as forming a whole. To understand the story is to understand *how and why* the successive episodes led to this conclusion, which far from being foreseeable, must finally be acceptable, as congruent with the episodes brought together by the story" (emphasis mine; *Time and Narrative* [3 vols; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984–86] 1:66, 67). This comment is part of Ricoeur's discussion of emplotment. Essentially, emplotment is a way to describe the organization

goal of this method is to identify the information structure of a discourse. For the purpose of this paper, two levels were introduced, main-line verbs and discourse peak. An application of this method to Colossians 2:16-17 follows.

DISCOURSE STRUCTURE OF COLOSSIANS 2:16-3:17

A discourse analysis of Colossians 2:16-3:17 (hereafter central section) suggests that this portion of Colossians is hortatory discourse with embedded exposition. The structural framework is a simple chiasmus. It provides the cohesion that holds the book together, and it provides the rubric in which the central section progresses to its discourse peak or climax.

Before outlining the chiasmus, I shall first define and illustrate this structure within the broader context of NT interpretation.

Definition

As commonly accepted chiasmus is inverted parallelism.¹⁷ The interior consists of either a single element (e.g., C) or two complementary elements (e.g., B B'). The exterior consists of pairs of complementary elements forming a composite meaning (e.g., A A'). These are illustrated in Figure 1.

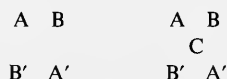


FIGURE 1. Chiastic Structures

Colossians 1:2 is an example of a simple chiasmus. The interior elements are "saints" and "faithful brethren." The exterior elements are two prepositional phrases, "in Colosse" and "in Christ."¹⁸ Note the following figure.

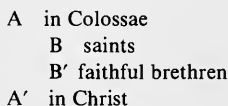


FIGURE 2. Chiastic Structure of Colossians 1:2

of a discourse, a concept which parallels Longacre's macrostructure. Because of emplotment an interpreter is able to "follow" a discourse from its beginning to the climax (*Time and Narrative*, 1:64-70).

¹⁷de Waard and Nida, *From One Language to Another*, 112-20.

¹⁸The English translation is "to the saints in Colosse and to the faithful brethren in Christ" (author's translation). The chiasmus is lost in the English.

Chiasmus and NT Interpretation

Blass-Debrunner note that the identification of chiasmus in the NT is controversial.¹⁹ Though chiastic structures are more readily associated with the OT,²⁰ NT studies have begun to recognize their presence and potential for interpretation.²¹ Some have taken a progressive position.²²

Several have identified chiastic structures over larger sections of text. M. Philip Scott, for example, suggests that a chiasmus is a key to interpreting Mark's Gospel.²³ George Rice identifies a chiasmus as the central section of Hebrews.²⁴ More germane to this paper, Steven M. Baugh suggests that the hymn of Colossians 1:15–20 is a chiasmus.²⁵

Identification of Chiastic Structure

A chiasmus marks the central section of Colossians (see Figure 3). The chiasmus provides the cohesion which ties together the two halves of the book and provides the rubric around which the argument of the central section develops to a climax. I will now summarize my interpretation (alternative positions are cited in the notes).

First, 2:16–3:17 is taken as a unit.²⁶ The basis for this interpretation is the shift of tense-aspect-mood and word order (see Figure 3). The

¹⁹F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Ed. Robert Funk; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961) 252.

²⁰de Waard and Nida, *From One Language to Another*, 112–20.

²¹Ronald Man, "The Value of Chiasm for New Testament Interpretation," *BSac* 141:146–57.

²²John Welch suggests that the issue is no longer whether chiasmus exists, but rather contends that research should focus upon (1) frequency of occurrence and (2) the structure's significance for exegesis (*Chiasmus in Antiquity* [Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981] 9). John Breck suggests that an intimate connection exists between rhetorical form and thematic context ("Biblical Chiasmus: Exploring Structure for Meaning," *BTB* 17 [1987] 70–74).

²³M. Philip Scott, "Chiastic Structure: A Key to the Interpretation of Mark's Gospel," *BTB* 15 (1985) 17–26.

²⁴George Rice, "The Chiastic Structure of the Central Section of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *AUSemS* 19 (1981) 243–46.

²⁵Steven M. Baugh, "The Poetic Form of Colossians 1:15–20," *West Th J* 47 (1985) 227–44. See also Robert K. Farrell, "The Structure and Theology of Luke's Central Section," *Trin J* 7ns (1986) 33–54.

²⁶There are several alternatives in the literature. Edward Lohse, for example, makes a major break between 2:23 and 3:1. He suggests that the former section is instructional, while the latter is hortatory. The conjunction οὖν "therefore" marks the transition between sections (*Colossians and Philemon* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971] 132). See also Eduard Schweizer, *The Letter to the Colossians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982) 171; N. W. Meyer, *The Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians and to Philemon* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1985) 372, 372; Werner Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982) 217; J. L. Houlden, *Paul's Letter from Prison* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977) 201; Curtis Vaughan,

central section of Colossians is hortatory discourse (see discussion below) and is set off from the earlier expository section by the conjunction οὐν "therefore" in 2:16.²⁷

Paragraph Elements	Tense-Aspect-Mood	Word Order
A (2:16-19)		
(1) Let no man, therefore, judge you (2:16)	Pres. 3rd singular	S-O-V
(2) Let no man condemn you (2:18)	Pres. 3rd singular	S-O-V
B (2:20-23)		
If you have died with Christ (2:20)	Mitigated imper.- Rhetorical question	
(1) which are meant for destruction (2:21)		
(2) which is a matter (2:23)		
B' (3:1-4)		
If you have been raised with Christ (3:1)		
(1) seek things above (3:1)	Pres. 2nd plural	(S)-0-V
(2) think on things above (3:2)	Pres. 2nd plural	(S)-0-V
A' (3:5-17)		
(1) Put to death, therefore (3:5)	Aorist 2nd plural	V-(S)-O
(a) But now you also put off (3:8)	Aorist 2nd plural	V-S-O
(b) Do not lie (3:9)	Pres. 2nd plural	V
(2) Put on therefore, as elect of God (3:12)	Aorist 2nd plural	V-S-O
(a) Let the peace of God rule (3:15)	Pres. 3rd singular	S-V
(b) Let the word of God dwell (3:16)	Pres. 3rd singular	S-V

FIGURE 3. A Discourse Layout of Colossians 2:16-3:17

Colossians and Philemon (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980) 89; Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1970) 560; Everett Harrison, *Colossians: Christ All-Sufficient* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971) 17, 74; and Homer Kent, *Treasures of Wisdom* (Winona Lake: BMH, 1978) 25.

Peter O'Brien offers a second position. A major break is made in 3:4. The former section is doctrinal, while the latter is practical. The conjunction οὐν marks the transition (*Colossians and Philemon* [Waco: Word, 1982] 174). See also Robert Gromacki, *Stand Perfect in Wisdom* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981) 131; D. Edmond Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (3 vols; Chicago: Moody, 1977) 233; and E. Simpson and F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957) 174, 175.

²⁷George Cannon makes a major break at 2:16 and 2:17. The *Haustafel* (3:18-4:1) is set off from 3:17. The basis for these conclusions is an epistolary analysis of Colossians (*The Use of Traditional Materials in Colossians* [Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983] 156, 157). See also Ralph Martin, *Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973) 89; and T. K. Abbott, *Epistle to the Ephesians and to the Colossians* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1985) lxi.

More specifically note that the central section begins with two imperatives, both present tense 3rd person singular. Word order is subject-object-verb. Subsequent imperatives deviate along either or both parameters (e.g., subsequent imperatives are 2nd person plural, there is a shift to the aorist tense and word order changes to verb-subject-object). The final two imperatives, however, return to the original form (i.e., present tense 3rd singular). It is at these two locations in the central section that the TENSION of the argument is lowest. I return to discuss tension below. At this point it is enough to suggest that the imperatives in A and A' mark the on-set and the terminus of the central section, forming an envelope structure.

Second, A (2:16-19) and A' (3:5-17) are the exterior elements of the chiasmus (see Figure 3). Recall that the imperatives of A and A' (specifically 2a and 2b) form an envelope structure. One should not conclude, however, that these imperatives balance each other to the exclusion of the other imperatives in A' (specially 1a and 1b). Rather I take A and the *whole* of A' to balance each other as the exterior elements because both A and A' are *hortatory* discourse. This stands over against B and B' which are *expository* discourse.

The two features which characterize hortatory discourse—agent orientation and non-chronological linkage—are present in A and A', suggesting why these sections are hortatory discourse. With regard to the former feature, note that the imperatives in A and A' are not embedded (cf. B and B'; see below). The expectation of A and A' is that believers (i.e., agents) will behave in a certain manner. Behavior, not exposition (of a topic), is the focus.

Logical progression is also evident. In A' (3:5-17), for example, the imperative, "Put your members to death" (3:5), is followed by a causal prepositional phrase, "because of which (δι' ὃ) the wrath of God is come" (3:6). The prepositional phrase provides the MOTIVATION to obey the imperative. Note also the aorist participles which follow the imperative, "do not lie to one another" (3:9): "since you have put off (ἀπεκδυσάμενοι) the old man . . . (3:9) [and] since you have put on (ἐνδυσάμενοι) the new man" (3:10).²⁸

The logical progression in A (2:16-19) is not as pronounced. Nonetheless the fact that the imperatives carry the reader forward through this paragraph suggests that A is also hortatory discourse. Here also believers (i.e., agents) are expected to behave in a certain manner. The lack of tension in A is further explained below.

And third, B (2:20-23) and B' (3:1-4) are the two central elements of the chiasmus (see Figure 3). Note that B and B' are introduced with

²⁸Whether one understands these aorist participles as causal or as attending circumstances following the imperative is not important here. In either case, both carry a logical progression of thought.

conditional clauses.²⁹ 2:20 reads, "If (ἐἰ) you have died with Christ from the elements of the world, why then, while living in the world, are you subject to ordinances?" (author's translation). 3:1 reads, "If (ἐἰ), therefore, you have died with Christ, seek things above" (author's translation). Also both sections refer to the earlier doctrinal exposition. B (2:20–23) refers back to 2:11, 12 and B' (3:1–4) refers back to 2:13.

Note also that the apodosis of both conditional sentences are imperatives (2:20, 3:1). The rhetorical question of 2:20 is a mitigated imperative (i.e., "you should not be subject to ordinances"). But at the same time these imperatives are embedded within expository discourse. Recall that the imperatives of A and A' are not embedded.

The *expository* nature of the central elements is more evident in B. The imperative of 2:20 is both mitigated and embedded within the conditional sentence. Note also that following the conditional sentence the elements are explained (i.e., "which are meant for destruction [2:21] and which is a matter . . ." [2:23]). The progression is logical (non-chronological) but the focus is on a topic (non-agent orientation). Recall that A and A' also shared logical progression but the purpose seemed quite different. In B and B' the logical progression is a consequence of *explaining* a topic, while in A and A' the logical progression is used to provide *motivation* for believers to behave in a certain manner. Consequently, the focus of B and B' is a *topic* while the focus of A and A' is *behavior*.

Though B' (3:1–4) begins with a conditional sentence, its expository character is not as clear. In B' the imperatives are not mitigated, but are typical 2nd person plural. The first, however, is embedded within the conditional sentence. These (and the other imperatives) are discussed below. At this time it is sufficient to say that a transition to discourse peak domain occurs in this section.

In summary it was suggested that the central section of Colossians is a chiasmus. Evidence was offered to suggest that 2:16–3:17 is a unit, that 2:16–19 (A) and 3:5–17 (A') balance each other as the exterior elements, and that 2:20–23 (B) and 3:1–4 (B') balance each other as the

²⁹It is at this point in the passage that the dynamic of interpretation becomes apparent. The interpreter must explain the semantics of the first class condition at the sentence level and the parallel sequence of the conditions at the discourse level. Typically, a discussion of the conditions is limited to sentence level. Gromacki, for example, notes that these are first class conditions, where the protasis is assumed to be true (*Stand Perfect in Wisdom*, 123). Kent notes that the conditional sentences are not intended to cause doubt, and are, therefore, translated, "since" (*Treasures of Wisdom*, 104). The problem with this explanation is that it overlooks possible larger discourse patterns. Recognition of the chiasmus provides a possible explanation as to why the conditional sentences appear in a balanced sequence and in this specific location in the text.

central elements.³⁰ The basis for this interpretation was that A and A' are *hortatory* discourse and that B and B' are *expository* discourse. I shall now turn to discuss the progression of thought through the chiasmus. This will clear up several issues left unanswered.

Progression of Argument

Discourse progresses to a climax or discourse peak. Main-line verbs carry the text forward, while specific text features mark discourse peak. It is proposed that the central section of Colossians is hortatory discourse with embedded exposition. The basis for this conclusion is the identification of discourse peak. The imperatives carry the argument forward. Changes in tense-aspect-mood and word order and use of the vocatives mark the progression that leads to the discourse peak.³¹

In his discussion of Hebrew hortatory discourse, Longacre suggests that imperatives (2nd pl), cohortatives (1st pl) and jussives (3rd pl) are

³⁰The chiasmus can account for an additional feature of the text, the distribution of οὐν. It was noted above that the conjunction οὐν is that basis upon which interpreters mark major breaks in the text (see note 27). The distribution of οὐν complements the interpretation proposed in this paper. Although οὐν introduces B' and A', it does not occur in B (note that there is a textual variant, but the evidence overwhelmingly favors its absence).

It seems reasonable that the οὐν of 2:16 and 3:1 join A and B' with the preceding expository section of Colossians. Recall that B' makes a back reference to 2:13. it also seems reasonable to suggest that the οὐν of 3:5 joins B' and A'. Since believers have been raised with Christ, they have a new life and consequently should put to death their members (3:5) and put on godly character (3:12). The logic, then, is that the theoretical exposition (B') proceeds the consequences of that theological truth (A'). That logical progression, however, is inverted vis-à-vis A and B. In terms of A and B, the consequences of the theological truth (A) precede the theological implication (B). Therefore, if my analysis is correct that A and B are inverted because of the chiasmus, one would expect οὐν to be absent at 2:20. This interpretation is summarized as follows.

A (oun: br) Theological implication (2:16–19)

B Theological exposition (2:20–23)

B' (oun: br) Theological exposition (3:1–4)

A' (oun) Theological implication (3:5–17)

where br means back reference to earlier position of Colossians.

FIGURE 6. Logical Development of the Central Section

³¹The progression that leads to the discourse peak is a statement based upon Ricoeur's notion of *emplotment*. At this point the reader should note that the focus of his discussion is narrative. The concept has been borrowed in this paper with the assumption that hortatory discourse, like narrative, is going somewhere. A progressive research program will further validate the expandability of the notion, *emplotment*, across non-narrative discourse types.

unranked (see Chart 2 above). Each form of imperative marks the main-line (or primary line of exhortation). Longacre explains that the basis to choose from one of the above forms is the sociological context. For example, if a speaker is sociologically dominant, then the imperative is used (e.g., Joseph [incognito] speaks to his brothers in Gen 42:14–16 in the imperative).³²

The imperatives of the central section are interpreted differently. It seems clear that the author maintains an authoritative position throughout Colossians. There does not appear to be a sociological basis for variation. Rather the imperatives carry the exhortation forward, marking the progression to the discourse peak. This interpretation can account for changes in tense-aspect-mood, changes in word order and the use of the vocatives.³³

The imperatives in A (2:16–19) are present tense 3rd singular. Word order is subject-object-verb. Recall that A is hortatory discourse though it lacks the tension characteristic of A' (3:5–17). This lack of tension suggests that A is PRE-PEAK. The underlying claim is that at peak, tension is highest.³⁴

Recall that B' (3:1–4) balances B in that both are expository discourse. The expository character of B' is not obvious. The imperatives are typical present tense 2nd plural. The first imperative is embedded within the conditional sentence, while the second is not.

It is in B' that a transition occurs. The shift from 3rd person to 2nd person imperatives increases the tension. The author moves from a mild exhortation in A to a firm command in B'. The fact that the second command, "Think on things above" (3:2), is not embedded, marks the transition from expository to hortatory discourse. Again

³²Longacre, *Joseph*, 119–23.

³³Ricoeur argues that emplotment (or the organization of events) means that an event in a story receives a definition from its contribution to the plot's development. It follows that a story "must organize [the events] into an intelligent whole, of a sort such that we can always ask what is the 'thought' of this story. In short, emplotment is the operation that draws a configuration out of a simple succession" (*Time and Narrative*, 1:65). This means that content selection or exclusion is controlled by the "thought" or the macrostructure. Longacre further explains this relationship: "Macrostructure analysis attempts to make explicit how the overall plan and global purpose of a story exercises a selective control on the incidents that are included and the relative elaboration of detail that characterize the presentation of each incident" (*Joseph*, 42). Part of the interpretive process, then, is to account for the text features (e.g., tense change) and content. It is necessary to relate the details of the text to its general ideas or argument (Longacre, *Joseph*, x). To account for these, then, provides a reasonable basis to claim that the interpreter has a viable understanding of a given discourse.

³⁴Longacre's comment about the relationship between peak and tension is helpful. He writes, "In describing a text we can draw its profile once we identify its peak(s) [note that the discourse as a whole has a peak and that individual episodes or sections can have a peak]. The profile attempts to represent diagrammatically the rising and falling tension of the text with the beginning, peak, and end as reference" (*Joseph*, 19).

tension increases. At the same time note that the word order remains object-verb. The subject is understood, a characteristic of unmarked (i.e., regular) imperatives. The fact that the word order remains constant suggests that B' is also part of PRE-PEAK (the fact that B is embedded exposition suggests that B is part of PRE-PEAK).

Two major shifts occur in A'. First, note that the imperatives shift from present to aorist tense.³⁵ And second, word order shifts from (subject)-object-verb to verb-subject-object.³⁶ It seems, then, that 3:5

³⁵Typically the basis to distinguish between the aorist and the present imperative is as follows. The aorist imperative means "start to do X," while the present imperative means "continue to do X." McKay questions this understanding. Instead, he defines the aorist as "representing an activity as a total action, in its entirety without dwelling on its internal details," while the present "represents an activity as a process going on, with the focus on its progress or development." The aorist imperative, therefore, urges activity as a whole action, while the present imperative urges activity as an ongoing process. McKay cites the aorist imperative, "Put to death" (Col 3:5). He suggests that this is an example in which a specific complete action is to be performed ("Aspect in Imperative Constructions in New Testament Greek," *Nov Test* 27 [1985] 203, 204, 207, 208).

Though McKay's paper is very helpful, this paper takes the discussion one step farther, that is a definition of tense vis-a-vis a higher level discourse concern. It is proposed that the shift from present tense to aorist tense and back to present tense go beyond a simple aspectual shift which McKay would propose. Rather changes in tense-aspect-mood mark the information structure. Figure 7 summarizes that structure vis-a-vis the imperatives.

Band 1	1.1 Aorist
Primary line of exhortation	1.2 Present (2pl)
	1.3 Present (3s)
Band 2	2.1 Embedded present (2pl)
Secondary line of exhortation	2.2 Mitigated imperative

FIGURE 7. Imperative Rank Scheme of the Central Section of Colossians

The scheme only reflects the information structure of the central section of Colossians. Band 1 imperatives carry higher levels of *tension*. It is suggested in this paper that the use of the vocative with the aorist tense marks the on-set of the domain of peak (3:5) and the discourse peak of the central section (3:12). Additional research will test this rank scheme's expandability to other portions of (NT) Greek hortatory discourse.

³⁶Blass-Debrunner suggest that Greek word order tends to be verb-subject-object. They do observe, however, that this word order is characteristic of *narrative* (*Grammar of the New Testament*, 428; see also Harold Greenlee, *A Concise Exegetical Grammar of the New Testament Greek* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986] 38). This observation is quite important. This paper has suggested that the typical word order for imperatives in the central section of Colossians is subject-object-verb. The word order does shift to verb-subject-object at the on-set of peak domain. It is at this location that the tension begins to peak. One should not conclude, however, that this interpretation conflicts with the observations of Blass-Debrunner. The word order that they have observed is characteristic of *narrative* while the suggested word order in this paper is characteristic of *hortatory* discourse. Longacre writes that different features which characterize narrative will differ from those which characterize hortatory discourse ("Verticle Revolution in

marks the on-set of PEAK-DOMAIN. A set of text features—change in tense-aspect-mood and word order change—point to a shift in the argument as tension increases.

Even within the domain of peak, an additional feature is present, the use of the vocative. Note that the imperative, “Put to death” (3:5) is unmarked that is, the subject is understood (cf. the imperative in B’). Note, however, the imperative, “Put off” (3:8). The subject is overt, the plural pronoun ὑμεῖς “you” is present. This increases the tension.

The imperative “Put on” (3:12) marks the DISCOURSE PEAK of the central section. Note that the imperative is aorist and the word order is verb-subject-object. But at the same time the imperative is highly marked and stands apart from all the imperatives. The use of the *extended* vocative, “elect of God, saints and beloved,” brings the tension to a climax. The text features of 3:12, taken as a set, mark this imperative as unique. Consequently, this imperative is taken as the final and most effective attempt to change the behavior of the readers.

The imperative, “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts” (3:15), marks POST-PEAK. Tension drops off as the author returns to use the present tense 3rd singular imperatives. Word order also returns to subject-verb (note that the verbs are intransitive).

Figure 4 illustrates the interpretation of the argument of the central section of Colossians as it progresses from pre-peak, to peak domain, to peak and to post-peak.

Let no man judge you (2:16)
 Let no man condemn you (2:18)
 Mitigated imperative [rhetorical question] (2:20)
 Seek things above [embedded imperative] (3:1)
 Think on things above (3:2)
 Put to death (3:5)
 But now *you* also put off (3:8)
 Put on *as elect of God, saints and beloved* (3:12)
 Let the peace of God rule (3:15)
 Let the word of God dwell (3:16)

FIGURE 4. Tension and Argument Structure of the Central Section of Colossians

Function of the Chiasmus

Typically the central element(s) of a chiasmus is the emphatic focus.³⁷ Augustine Stock calls this the climactic centrality.³⁸ Ronald

Linguistics,” 247–70). This suggests that there are two areas which need additional attention: (1) the relationship between word order and discourse type and (2) the relationship between word order and information structure. It may no longer be advisable to discuss word order in terms of emphasis alone.

³⁷Welch, *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 10.

³⁸Augustine Stock, “Chiastic Awareness and Education in Antiquity,” *BTB* 4 (1984) 23.

Man expands upon this and further explains the possible usages of the chiasmus. He suggests that a chiasmus might point to the following: emphasis of a passage (Luke 1:6–25), the point of a passage (John 1:1–18) or the purpose of a book (Luke 10:25–18:18).³⁹

The chiasmus proposed in this paper, however, seems to have a different function. The central elements of the chiasmus (2:20–3:4) do not mark the emphatic focus of the central section (i.e., discourse peak). Rather, as noted above, both B (2:20–24) and B' (3:1–4) make a back reference to the earlier exposition (1:9ff). B specifically refers back to 2:11, 12 and B' refers back to 2:13. This back reference, then, provides the cohesion which ties the expository section of Colossians (1:9ff) to the hortatory section or the central section of Colossians (2:16–3:17). Discourse peak is not identified with the central elements, but is identified with the imperative "Put on" (3:12) in A'. Figure 5 summarizes this interpretation.

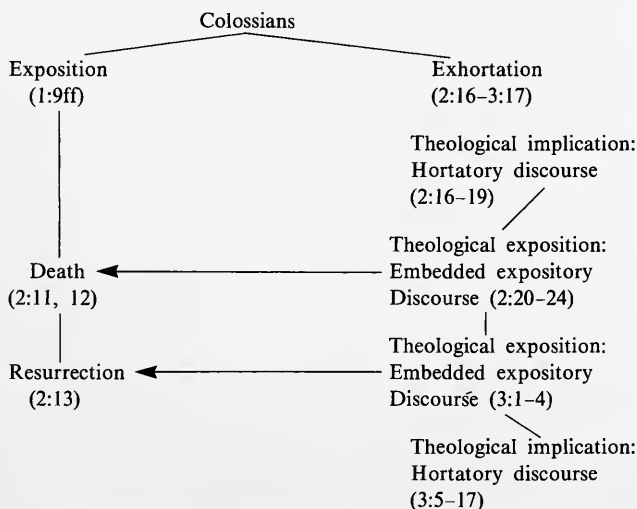


FIGURE 5. Cohesion of the Book of Colossians

Summary

In summary, this paper proposed that a chiastic structure marks the central section of Colossians. 2:16–3:17 forms a unit. A simple chiasmus serves as the structural rubric. A (2:16–19) and A' (3:5–17) balance each other as the external elements. Each are taken as hortatory discourse. B (2:20–23) and B' (3:1–4) balance each other as the central elements. Each are taken as expository discourse.

³⁹Man, "The Value of Chiasm," 146–57.

The central section of Colossians is hortatory discourse with embedded exposition. The imperatives mark the main-line which carries the argument forward. Specific changes in tense-aspect-mood and word order and the use of the vocative serve to mark pre-peak, peak domain, peak and post-peak. The imperative, "Put on, therefore, as elect of God, saints, beloved, . . ." (3:12), is identified as discourse peak.

IMPLICATIONS

Several implications follow from this study. The first implication is the potential value discourse grammar has for the interpretation of the NT. The value of such a research program is that the interpreter is provided with a method by which one can ask different types of questions and by which one can address those questions. Such questions might include, what are the text-based features that point to the discourse peak? How do the text features mark the progression to that peak? How is a given section of text to be divided? What are the text-based features that point to that conclusion? What is the main point of a given section of text? How does the identification of peak contribute to understand that main point?

The second implication is the matter of evidence and argumentation. This study showed that a number of grammatical changes occurred in the central section of Colossians—tense-aspect-mood, word order changes and the use versus non-use of the vocative. In turn a set of interpretive conclusions were offered to account for those text-based features. This should not imply that this set of conclusions are the final answer. This paper simply provides an interpretation that can account for these features. It seems to follow, however, that an alternative interpretation must also be able to account for the same features.

And the third implication is the value of identifying discourse types. More specifically, the basis for positing a chiasmus as the structural framework for the central section is the identification of discourse types. Recall that the exterior elements are hortatory discourse while the interior elements are expository discourse. Typically, however, a chiasmus is identified by content. An implied consequence is that the parallel content must be of relatively equal length (i.e., number of words). Constructing a chiasmus in such a manner would call into question the proposed chiasmus of this paper, for A and A' are not of relatively equal length (A' is about twice the length). However, if it is possible to posit a chiasmus based upon discourse types, length may no longer be an a priori factor of evaluation.

THIRD CLASS CONDITIONS IN FIRST JOHN

DAVID L. WASHBURN

Most of the third class conditions in the First Epistle of John are of the "present general" type, i.e., they express conditions based on present states or realities rather than future probabilities. These conditions share a semantic domain with the articular participle, and John often uses both constructions to express the same idea. The choice of one or the other had to do with stylistic variation rather than difference of meaning.

* * *

SOME time ago, James Boyer published a study of third class conditions in the New Testament. In it, he disputed the semantic distinction between the "future probable" and "present general" uses of ἔάν with the subjunctive.

If it seems strange to us that such distinct types should be thrown together in one grammatical form it should alert us to the probability that we are not looking at it as the Greek writer did. Apparently he did not see these as diverse types; there must be some common characteristic which in his mind linked them in the same manner of expression. His choice to use the subjunctive points to the common element. They are both undetermined, contingent suppositions, future in time reference. Whether that potentiality was seen as some particular occurrence or one which would produce the result whenever it occurred was not the primary thought in the mind of the speaker. He used a form which in either case expressed a future eventuality.¹

Many grammarians, on the other hand, posit a semantic distinction between future probability vs. present general conditions based on the tenses used in the apodosis of the condition.² Boyer questioned this, as well.

¹J. Boyer, "Third (and Fourth) Class Conditions," *GTJ* 3:173.

²A. H. Chase and H. Phillips, *A New Introduction to Greek* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U., 1961) 78. Cf. J. G. Machen, *New Testament Greek for Beginners* (New York: MacMillan, 1957) 132, as well as M. Zerwick, *Biblical Greek* (Rome: Scripta

Next, examining the 81 examples of the present indicative in the apodosis of general suppositions, it is probable that even these represent future time. 20 of these seem to be gnomic or atemporal, which includes future time. But specifically in the apodosis of a contingent condition this present must be logically future to the fulfillment of the protasis.³

The trouble is, this logical connection is true of first class conditions, as well. Thus, in the simple statement "If it's raining, you need to come inside," the apodosis (coming inside) is logically future to the protasis (rain falling). But this does not necessarily mean that the whole matter is future *from the writer's point of view*. Expressed with a Greek subjunctive, this sentence could easily mean that any time it rains, the addressee needs to get in out of it, including right now.

This logical relation, therefore, begs the real question: when a writer used ἔάν with a subjunctive, was he thinking always or primarily of "future eventuality," or is it possible that he sometimes described a present state of things?⁴ This paper will seek to answer this question for the book of First John.

1 John contains 28 occurrences of ἔάν with the subjunctive. They fall into three broad categories.

1) Definitely Future

Two passages fit this category: 2:28, "continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming (NIV)," and 3:2, "We know that when he appears, we shall be like him (NIV)." Both refer to Christ's return, and so are future due to the nature of the event.

2) Either Present or Future (Uncertain)

"If anyone sins" in 2:1 might depict the present situation: "Whenever someone sins, we have an advocate." It might state a future probability: "If anyone sins, we have an advocate (the advocate will still be there to intercede)." The previous statement, "I am writing these things so that you won't sin" slightly favors the futuristic interpretation, but this is not certain. John's opponents may have convinced some people that they had sinned beyond the boundaries of forgive-

Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1963), 109-11, though Zerwick is somewhat more flexible in his understanding of what is allowable in an apodosis.

³Boyer 174-75.

⁴J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3: *Syntax*, by Nigel Turner (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963) 114 makes no distinction between the two functions, but cites Matt 5:23 as an example of the meaning "As often as you . . ." He says "the most common example of this condition [with the present ἔάν subjunctive] in the Ptol. pap. is stereotyped phrases in decrees and punishments, having continual validity." He contrasts the aorist subjunctive as "a definite event . . . occurring only once in the future, and conceived as taking place before the time of the action of the main verb. It is expectation, but not fulfillment as yet."

ness. To this John would say that they cannot forfeit God's forgiveness, because the Advocate is there and has been there all along. We cannot be sure which was in John's mind.

2:24 is unclear, as well. The preceding imperative "What you heard from the beginning should remain in you" seems to set up a present general statement that builds on this thought. The apodosis "you also will remain in the Son and in the Father (NIV)" with its future tense appears to contradict this flow of thought. It may be that John had both present state and future probability in mind, so he combined a present imperative (continue in this state) with a future condition (the desired state will continue if the condition is met). We cannot know for sure.

5:14 is another uncertain passage. It is similar to 3:22 except that it reads $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu\ \tau\iota$ instead of $\delta\ \epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$. John prefaced the condition by saying that what follows (introduced by $\delta\tau\iota$) is the boldness that we have before God. The expression of this boldness is the knowledge that He hears us when we ask according to His will. By the nature of the act, this could be future from John's perspective; however, since he includes himself in the declaration, it would seem to be a present reality in his mind, as well.

The force of 5:16 depends on its frame of reference. Apart from the mysterious sin unto death and the sin not unto death, the identity of the "brother" is the key to the condition. If it is a general statement about any brother, it is a future condition: "If one of you should see his brother sinning . . ." But if "brother" is a veiled reference to John's opponents,⁵ then John is giving specific instructions to the faithful on how to deal with the present problem. Without more information we cannot be sure which was the case.

3) Present State of Things

The remaining 22 occurrences of this construction in 1 John all seem to focus on present time, or even to include an element of recent past events. Much of this present/future question has to do with the nature of John's polemic against his opponents. The five conditional

⁵Most commentators do not consider this possibility. For example, R. E. Brown, *The Epistles of John*, Anchor Bible (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982) 611 calls the brother a "Johannine Christian" (though he seems to see the condition as a present general, p. 610). However, as K. Braune, *The Epistles General of John*, Lange's Commentary; (New York: Scribners, 1869) 170, pointed out, the term "his brother," while denoting a member of the Church community, does not necessarily indicate "a regenerate person." Cf. 2:19; not all members of the Community were genuine believers. S. S. Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word, 1984) 299 vacillates between reference to one within the church and one outside it, and concludes that "the writer is clearly dealing with those who are, in the first place, related to the Christian circle." The question, however, is not whether the "brother" is related to the Christian circle, but the precise nature of that relationship.

statements in chapter 1 illustrate this: "If we say we have fellowship with Him, yet walk in darkness (1:6) . . . If we walk in the light as He is in the light (1:7) . . . If we say that we have no sin (1:8) . . . If we confess our sins (1:9) . . . If we say we have not sinned (1:10) . . ." On the one hand, if John is stating probabilities when he says these things, then he may be stating "future eventuality." If, on the other hand, verses 6, 8 and 10 are quotes of his opponents, then he is dealing with present (and even recent past) realities.⁶ The question is: if John was not quoting those who were already making such claims, why would he bring up such topics at all? It is more likely that he was citing claims that his opponents had already made and were continuing to make.

If this is the case, we must conclude that John understands his words to refer to a present state. Those who claim to have fellowship with God but who live in darkness are liars. Those who claim sinlessness are deceiving themselves and making God a liar. Conversely, those who live in the light do have fellowship with God, and those who confess their sins have forgiveness. All this is happening right now, from John's point of view.

"This is how we know that we know Him" in 2:3 expresses a present reality: we have known God, and keeping His commands is the confirmation of this fact. Logically, if this condition is future the believer of John's time could not have had present reassurance of his relationship to the Lord; he would have had to wait for an undetermined time to see if he "keeps his commandments." But the following context indicates that John was dealing with present conditions.

The prohibition about loving the world in 2:15a sets the tone for the conditional sentence in 2:15b. A futuristic interpretation would read, "If anyone should fall in love with the world, he will not have the love of the Father in him." But a present state makes more sense: "Whoever is intensely attached to the world does not have the love of the Father in him." This condition is an evaluation of anyone who

⁶J. R. W. Stott, *The Epistles of John*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) 72, calls them quotes of the opposers. W. Barclay, *The Letters of John and Jude* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960) 34, seems to agree, as does Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John* 21. The view of B. F. Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952) 19, is unclear: "the exact form (ἐὰν εἴπωμεν) . . . contemplates a direct assertion of the several statements, and not simply the mental conception of them." Brown, *Epistles* 197 does not address this question, but says, "These are not merely possible contingencies but reflect the language of jurisprudence [following W. Nauck—see pp. 43–44] . . . They are 'exceptional' . . . equivalent to 'whenever.'" D. W. Burdick, *The Letters of John the Apostle* (Chicago: Moody, 1985) 121, said, "No doubt some of these hypothetical statements (vv. 6, 8, 10) represent claims made by the false teachers." Similarly at 4:20 he claimed that the conditional statement expresses a "hypothetical situation," yet affirmed that John was probably quoting his opponents (p. 339). One wonders how hypothetical a direct quote can be.

displays this love for the world at the time that John is writing, and in fact at any time.

The essence of 2:29 appears to be present: "If you already know that He is righteous then you also know that anyone who practices righteousness has been born of Him." The combination of present and perfect tenses in the apodosis seems to preclude a future sense for this knowledge.

3:20 may be one of Boyer's "gnomic" conditions; it seems to carry both past and present implications, as well as future. Even when the heart stirs self-condemnation, God is greater and knows the reality of things.⁷ This truth covers present condemnations as well as possible future ones, and may even extend to self-condemnations of the past that still affect the believer.

3:21 continues this theme with the same present-reality force. If the heart does not condemn, then boldness before God is enhanced.

3:22 carries on in the same vein. The sense of receiving what we request has future implications, to be sure, but in the context John is covering present states, such as keeping God's commandment of belief in Jesus and loving one another (v. 23).

4:12 also has present general force. It does not say that loving one another means God *will* abide in us, but that loving one another proves that God *does* abide in us. It does not mean that God's love will be perfected in us, but that it is in a present state of being perfected, and has been in this process since we believed (v. 7,8).

The context of 4:15 is a present reality; we abide in Him and He in us. We know this because He has given us His Spirit. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God is in this state. The combination $\delta\varsigma\ \xi\acute{\alpha}\nu$ in this condition may serve to modify the force to a present reality, but this is not a hard rule of grammar. John could have said $\xi\acute{\alpha}\nu\ \tau\iota\varsigma\ \acute{\omicron}\mu\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\acute{\eta}\sigma\eta$ and the context would still demand a sense of present reality.

4:20 echoes the thought and force of the conditions in chapter 1. Anyone who claims to love God, yet hates his brother, is a liar. This again appears to be a quote and an evaluation of John's opponents, who were in fact making such false claims.

5:15 builds on the thought begun in 5:14 (see above) using two conditional statements. The first reads, "And if we know that He hears us . . . we know that we have the things we ask for." This is a mixed protasis: $\xi\acute{\alpha}\nu$ with the (semantically) present indicative $\omicron\acute{\iota}\delta\alpha\mu\epsilon\nu$. Since

⁷I have followed the punctuation of the KJV at this point, because it seems to make better sense of the phrase $\delta\tau\iota\ \xi\acute{\alpha}\nu$. Even following the punctuation of UBS³, however, the force of the condition remains a present general: "Whenever our heart condemns us, this is how we know we are of the truth etc."

it grows out of a logical inference from verse 14, its thrust would seem to be the same, i.e. present reality with overtones for future continuance.

The second condition in 5:15 is unusual. It almost appears to be appositional to "Hear hears us." Yet, this yields no sense: "If we know that He hears us whatever we might request." The combination $\delta \xi \acute{\alpha} \nu$ appears to have a semantic value of "whenever," that is, "We know that He hears us whenever we make a request." This throws a definite sense of present state into the whole chain of conditions in 5:14-15.

This brief examination shows that some third class conditions in 1 John ought to be understood to deal with present general realities and states, not exclusively with future probabilities. This conclusion draws some reinforcement from the fact that 1 John has another construction that deals with many of the same topics in much the same way.

John was fond of the articular participle as an idiom for "whoever" (cf. 2:15 above). Of the 48 occurrences of this construction in the epistle, only 6 depart from this meaning.⁸ The rest share a certain amount of overlap with John's third class conditions, both semantically and in terms of subject matter.⁹

For example, 4:12 (condition) says that if we love each other God abides in us. 4:7 (participle) affirms that he who loves has been born of God and knows God. In both verses the mark of a relationship with God is love for one another. The difference in construction appears to be a stylistic variation without any particular semantic distinction.

Other examples abound. 2:3 "If we keep His commandments we know that we have known Him" and 2:4 "He who says 'I know Him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar" give two sides of a coin, expressed in chiasmic order. 2:24 and 2:6 share the theme of abiding; 4:15 and 2:23 deal with confessing the Son; 1:7 "If we walk in the light" and 2:9 "He who says he abides in the light" say the same thing with different words. These examples show that John was comfortable using both grammatical constructions to convey similar ideas. He set the stage in chapter 1 with five third class conditions in a row,¹⁰ and proceeded to alternate between the two forms as he pleased from 2:3 on.

The most striking example of this overlap in meaning is in 4:20: "If anyone says 'I love God' but hates his brother, he is a liar. For he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God

⁸These are 2:26; 5:1b; 5:4, 6, 7, 16.

⁹Braune, *Epistles* 31, noted many of the overlaps in subject matter, calling both constructions "an *objective* possibility . . . i.e. he assumes that it may be so, and that the event would show whether it will be so (emphasis his)." See also Brown, *Epistles* 43.

¹⁰Chapter 1 has no articular participles.

whom he has not seen." The first sentence is a third class condition with a dual protasis, similar to the conditions in chapter 1: "If anyone says . . . but hates." The second is a participle: "He who does not love his brother." We could as easily translate the two identically, for both carry the same sense of a present general reality. Again, alternation between the two was a stylistic choice.

Several commentators have tried to find distinctions between the two constructions in 4:20, but there is no agreement as to what the distinctions are. Westcott said that the conditional sentence is a "particular case" while the participle is a "general principle."¹¹ Brooke, on the other hand, said that the claim in the condition is "mentioned quite generally" whereas the participial clause is "more definite."¹² Most other commentators do not treat the two clauses in relation to each other at all.

Many of the conditions examined also seem to share a semantic domain with the "first class" or simple condition.¹³ This becomes clear when we examine the five occurrences of εἰ with the indicative in 1 John. Of these, 2:19 is contrary-to-fact, 4:1 means "whether they are from God" (no apodosis), and 5:9 is concessive, "although we receive man's testimony."¹⁴

The remaining two, 3:13 and 4:11, grow out of logical relationships with the absolute statements that precede them. In 3:12-13, Cain murdered his brother because his own deeds were evil while Abel's were righteous. Believers should not be surprised, therefore, if the world hates them.¹⁵ In 4:9-11, God has poured out His love on us, so we ought to love one another. Each of these sentences states a "how much more" conclusion, phrased in the form of a first class condition. They clearly do not, however, contain the hypothetical elements necessary to be conditions; they express a logical result of what has gone before. We must conclude that 1 John does not contain a true "first

¹¹Westcott 161; see also Smalley 263.

¹²A. E. Brooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Johannine Epistles*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1976) 126.

¹³J. L. Boyer, "First Class Conditions: What do they Mean?" *GTJ* 2:75-114 has shown beyond any doubt that the first class construction in its pure form is a "simple" condition with no hint as to probability of fulfillment, and that the old "assumed as fulfilled" (cf. F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* [tr. R. W. Funk; Chicago: U. of Chicago, 1961, hereafter BDF] p. 189) designation should be discarded. For view similar to, but somewhat weaker than Boyer's, see Zerwick, p. 102-7.

¹⁴For this use of εἰ with the indicative, see A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 1026. Boyer, "First Class" 113, considers 5:9 a true first class condition.

¹⁵Brown, *Epistles* 445 translates "when" with some hesitation, despite the fact that Koine Greek often used εἰ in place of ὅτι (BDF p. 237).

class" condition,¹⁶ and that this condition's semantic field has been at least partially displaced by the third class construction in this epistle.¹⁷

CONCLUSIONS

First, we can conclude that John tended to use εἰς with the subjunctive with much the same sense that he used the articular participle, with the meaning "whoever." His overlap of subject matter and his dovetailing of the two constructions in several places confirms this. If he had intended a semantic distinction between the two, it would not make sense to use two different forms to say the same thing. They must, in this epistle, share the same semantic domain. Furthermore, both constructions infringe on the domain of the first class condition. This kind of overlap is consistent with what we know about the blurring of distinctions that were occurring in Koine Greek in the first century.¹⁸

Second, we must conclude that Boyer has overstated the distinction of the third class condition, at least as far as 1 John is concerned. The so-called "present general" condition is a distinct entity in 1 John just as it is in Classical Greek. It states a condition based on present realities or situations. That is, in many instances the thought that whenever the protasis is fulfilled, the apodosis results, was in fact the primary thought in John's mind.

¹⁶The only clear first class condition in the Johannine epistles is 2 John 10. The two occurrences of εἰς in 3 John (5, 10) show the same semantic blurring as those in 1 John. BDF p. 189 mentions the occasional overlapping of εἰ and εἰς.

¹⁷Cf. Zerwick, p. 106 on the overlap between the two constructions.

¹⁸For other examples of this kind of blurring, see Robertson 448-49; D. W. Lightfoot, *Principles of Diachronic Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge U., 1979) 26 includes a discussion of the breakdown of sequence-of-tense rules relating to the Greek "historical present" as a further example of blurring. Even E. D. Burton, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1976 reprint of 1898 edition) 105, recognized that some overlapping occurs when he classed some instances of εἰ with the present indicative as third class conditions. See also the insightful review of *The Discovery Bible, New Testament* by R. L. Thomas in *Master's Seminary Journal* 1:85-87.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ruth: A Story of God's Grace, by Cyril J. Barber. Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1989. Pp. 198. n.p. Cloth; reprint ed., Chicago: Moody Press, 1983.

This reprint of a 1983 Moody Press volume is presented by Loizeaux as "an expositional commentary" [title page] written "for the Bible student rather than the Bible scholar" [jacket]. Initially the material was prepared for publication in two [presumably] Christian magazines and later reworked into a series of weekly Bible studies for the library staff of International Christian Graduate University where the writer was serving as a consultant [preface].

The author's rhetorical abilities coupled with his concern to address the relevancy of Biblical text will undoubtedly prompt a warm reception of the work, particularly for use in Bible study groups.

The methodology employed in the book, however, is seriously flawed. Several particulars make the point. First, and perhaps of greatest concern, is the writer's clear penchant for addressing the text *via* a psychological paradigm. Chapter 1 ["The Dynamics of Life's Decisions"], for example, is a more psychologically oriented case study in the exercise and consequences of decision making than an exposition of the text. At one point in chapter 3 the writer refers to the fact that "modern research has identified five characteristics that are of fundamental importance to each one of us," [52]: a sense of personal autonomy, sexuality, an internalized sense of morality, a career choice, and a hope for the future. The next several pages are then devoted to looking at Ruth's situation through that grid. That these are "of fundamental importance to each one of us" may be true; but that they are the spectacles through which the narrative was intended to be read is subject.

Equally problematic is the writer's bent toward "creating text"—a trait that is demonstrated in different ways. The tendency is seen in Chapter 1 where Barber presumes to reflect greater insight into Elimelech's motives than the biblical writer himself. Typical of the work is the making of assertions which exceed the text. In a paragraph entitled "A Case in Point" [Chapter 1] Barber asserts that the family of Elimelech farmed land in Moab for about ten years following his death and prior to the deaths of Mahlon and Chilion. The text, however, shows no concern over the family occupation during the ten year period in question. A general unwillingness to live with enigmas and anomalies, some of which are most likely intentional, characterizes Barber's approach to the narrative. At times this discomfort with the original author's ambiguity leads Barber to "append the text." Theological enhancement of the narrative by the original writer, through the use of unexplained enigma, is consequently neutralized.

The concern in all this has to do with modelling an appropriate hermeneutical methodology—both generally as well as one which specifically addresses the dynamics of narrative. Unfortunately, what is illustrated in this work is a license to import personal interests to a text, rather than a commitment to discover those of the narrator. That Barber has an appreciation of narrative is evident, but his treatment does not evidence a serious sensitivity to some of the genre's subtleties.

Other less critical questions might also be raised about the context. "Reward for faithful obedience" is the overly simplified explanation of God's blessing of Ruth and Naomi [chapters 8 and 9]. A different perspective, however, is introduced if the reader understands that intentional ambiguity enhances the theological impact of the text and therefore respects it. Although the reader of the narrative is left at times to ponder the enigma of various actions of both Naomi and Ruth, he is made aware that God's blessing is ultimately a divine determination. This perspective is not foreign to Old Testament narrative. The inclusion of the elder's reference to Perez and Tamar and the concluding genealogy is undoubtedly intended to stimulate thoughts about the similar dynamics which inform the Genesis 38 and Ruth narratives.

While discussing the eventual marriage relationship of Boaz and Ruth, Barber asserts that "A number of people were involved in bringing about the eventual marriage of Ruth but God did the most of all," [115]. On the one hand, this curious statement may be taken as not well thought out; on the other hand, it may reflect the writer's perception of the interplay between God and man in the realization of divine purpose.

As the title suggests, Barber sees "the grace of God" as the theme of Ruth. The manifestation of God's grace to Naomi and Ruth is not challenged, but that the narrator intended to make that "the theological drive shaft" of his work is open to serious doubt. In each of the three places in the book where the term *hēn* is used [2:2, 10, 13] the possibility of experiencing man's favor/grace is anticipated. Unexplained and enigmatic human activity is an integral part of each major movement of the story, yet divine purpose is achieved; therefore, the reader is led to the conclusion that because of God's providential control over the sometimes appropriate, sometimes misdirected deeds of men, His purposes are always realized.

The suggestion that this is an "expositional commentary" on the book of Ruth is somewhat unfortunate, inasmuch as it is not the product of "listening to the text" and allowing it to surface its own interests and concerns.

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Judges: At Risk in the Promised Land, by E. John Hamlin. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990. Pp. 182. \$12.95. Paper.

E. John Hamlin's book entitled *Judges: At Risk in the Promised Land*, the commentary on the book of Judges in the "International Theological Commentary" series is a very readable book. He has done an excellent job of balancing devotional reading with good scholarship.

The purpose of Hamlin is to reveal how the author of the book of Judges is showing the risk of living in a secular, sinful society. For Israel it was the risk of living among the Canaanites and becoming culturalized by them. As the Israelites lived in this pagan culture they found themselves gradually becoming too much like their pagan neighbors. At times the change was so gradual that it was not recognizable. Hamlin shows that the author was not pulling together a series of historical events, but that he had organized his material to show a progressive spiritual and moral deterioration within the tribes of Israel. In the main corpus of the book he takes each judge individually in order to characterize the person. However, in the overall structure he shows how these have been grouped with a distinct purpose in the author's mind.

An interesting and helpful section of his commentary is his discussion of the last five chapters of Judges, which is a collection of two ancient stories that do not seem to have any relationship with the rest of the book. This has always been a difficult section for commentators. The normal attitude has been that they were later additions with no direct tie to the history of the book of Judges. This unsatisfactory approach has been given an alternative here. Hamlin thinks that the author of this book has intentionally included these two difficult stories as a culmination to the moral decay that comes as a part of the risk of living in the pagan culture. According to him, these two stories show just how far things had deteriorated since the beginning of the period of the judges.

An excellent and refreshing addition to this commentary is his "Perspectives," which appear at the end of each chapter. "Perspectives" is his efforts to give modern applications and a permanent theological message to the history. His modern applications are generally very good. In this way he shows the risks of moral and social deterioration in the modern world. Many of the same problems exist today, even though they have taken on a different culture and language. At times more applications would have been helpful.

The ITC Series states its purpose as that of writing commentaries that would have applications to modern cultures on the international scene. Having spent twenty years teaching in Latin America, an application that is not purely "American" is welcome. Hamlin, who teaches in the Orient, has given proper attention to this international application. One difficulty that sometimes arises with this purpose in mind is the tendency to strain a point of comparison. There seem to be a few cases of this, such as the comparison of oral tradition with that of the Chinese legend, "The Three Kingdoms."

The weakness of this commentary, which does not outweigh its value, is his dogmatism on the critical aspect of the book of Judges. Dr. Hamlin accepts the so-called "Deuteronomistic history" uncritically and accepts the theory of the dating of this book in the late seventh century B.C. He then interprets the book in that setting as if it were a fact and not a theory. To eliminate such a theory would not have taken away from his interpretation because he shows that the interpretation of the book does not depend on a particular historical period. He correctly states that "The author of Judges was not merely passing on information about the period before the Monarchy, but wrote as a theological interpreter of the past with a message for . . ." the present and the future. He then sets out to unfold that message of eternal value.

Less dogmatism on some of the critical apparatus concerning the history and the authorship of the book would have been helpful. However, this does

not lessen appreciation for the message which Dr. Hamlin has portrayed in his interpretations. This type of commentary is very much needed for the Old Testament historical books. Such a commentary helps to bring alive these stories that too often have been left in the "cobwebs" of ancient history and/or myth. It is hoped that forthcoming commentaries in this series have as much to add to the interpretation of these Old Testament books that are so often difficult to read and use.

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The Rise and Fall of Civilization, by David Hocking. 1989. Portland: Multnomah Press. Pp. 157. \$8.00. Paper.

Dr. David Hocking is a California pastor, teacher on The Biola Hour, and graduate of Grace Seminary. He is also a popular writer and speaker, especially on marriage and the family. This short book is helpful to the pastor who seeks insight on the early chapters of Genesis. Hocking has pulled together many alternate views and gives a conservative analysis. The book has clearly resulted from a sermon series on Genesis. The writing is somewhat uneven in its coverage: forty percent of the total text is spent on Genesis 1; the final book chapter covers Genesis 6:14-9:19 with a rather abrupt ending.

Hocking does some "scientist bashing", accusing them of denying the creation and the flood but it might be suggested that just as many liberal theologians are guilty! He talks about "many solar systems" (p. 18), confusing the reader since we only know of the one in which we live. Hocking challenges the idea of an ice age (p. 146). Apparently he is unaware of excellent progress by creationists in understanding the post flood ice age. One final shortcoming: the book has no Scripture or subject index.

On the positive side, Hocking convincingly promotes literal creation days. He also shows why the Fall of mankind is essential to an understanding of origins (p. 89). Sex, marriage, and human relationships get excellent treatment as might be expected from Hocking (p. 77-86). This Genesis study, from creation through the flood, is a useful guide for the pastor or Bible student.

DON DEYOUNG
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Analytical Key to the Old Testament: Volume 1, Genesis-Joshua, by John Joseph Owens. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. Pp. 1020. n.p. Cloth.

The *Analytical Key to the Old Testament* by Dr. John J. Owens is a four volume set in which he lists and analyzes every word of the Old Testament in the form in which it appears in the biblical text. In volume one he carefully lists

and analyzes each word, verse by verse, that appears in Genesis through Joshua. The format is one which is easily followed, with the lists set apart by verses.

In his analysis the author carefully gives the part of speech of each word, along with the form in which it is found in the text. In the case of verbs, he includes the verbal root (something that would be helpful if done with some noun forms as well). A further help is the inclusion of the page number for each word as it is found in the *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* by Brown, Driver and Briggs (hereafter BDB), as well as important references in *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. The inclusion of the references in both BDB and in Gesenius will be a great time saver for the person who would like to pursue a further study of these words. The page references from BDB make it possible for the student to find variant readings and translations of the word and the cross references with Gesenius' Grammar are helpful for variations provided by the grammatical structure.

The translation given by Owens is a very simple one which reflects the form in which the word is found in the verse. The author himself has stated that he is not able to give the shades of meanings presented by the various verb roots, such as *Qal, pi el, hiphil*. At this point the student must fall back on his knowledge of Hebrew. It has been suggested that a good addition to the first volume would be to include a chart that shows the specific purpose of each verbal root. Of course, Owens' purpose is not to write a Hebrew grammar nor to give a thorough study of biblical words.

This book is a tool that can be used by the Bible student to save time in looking up details. With this in hand, the word and the context in which it is found can be developed toward an interpretation.

This is a tool to be used by one who already has a good base in the study of Hebrew and simply wants to save time in his exegetical study of the Old Testament. It probably should not be used by one who is trying to learn the language because it could become a crutch that would hinder him from applying himself to the learning of the grammar. It is a very valuable asset for the pastor who has studied Hebrew but has not had the time to keep up with all of the details of Hebrew grammar. It has been my experience as a professor of Hebrew to hear former students say that they regrettably had not kept up with Hebrew and that it would be very difficult for them to use the Hebrew Bible in their sermon preparations today. It is tragic that the knowledge of Hebrew is so often lost. Even more, it is sad that the pastor does not take as full advantage of the valuable language tools for exegeting the Old Testament as he does with the New Testament. This book can help to change that situation. A busy pastor can use this to help him exegete the Hebrew text and have more of his study time to develop his exposition from this exegesis. I know of no other work of this nature. I personally welcome this as a good tool for a prepared pastor who wants to continue to use the biblical languages more effectively in his sermon preparations. I also see it as a helpful tool for the professor of Hebrew. He can profit from this by keeping it as a check on his own translations and analyses.

JAMES L. CRAWFORD
UNION UNIVERSITY, JACKSON, TN

The Betrayal of God: Ideological Conflict in Job, by David Penchansky. Louis ille: Westminster/John Knox, 1990. Pp. \$11.95. Pp. 124.

Job, like Genesis, Isaiah and the Psalms, is one of those biblical books that appears to possess a limitless bibliography. It seems unnecessary to continue adding monographs of a general nature on these books since all too often they are only a dressing-up in modern vocables of interpretations already gathering dust on library shelves. Penchansky is a pleasant surprise in this regard. A meaningful contribution was unexpected from an 86 page book. He is well-read, however, and writes with excellent style taking scholarship forward an additional ten yards by interpreting a complex book cohesively, something that can be said of very few books in biblical studies coming out these days.

Dissonance within the book of Job is the focus of chapter two, namely the dissonance between the frame (prose prologue and epilogue) and the center of the book of Job. Refreshingly, he is not the kind of literary analyst that divorces literature from history but is concerned with issues of date and historical development. After lamenting traditional methods of dating the book, he argues convincingly that the "absence of historical reference is a key datable feature of the book" (p. 34).

The real work of interpretation begins in the third chapter. One paragraph will help to illuminate his approach.

Notions of piety can be instruments of control, or, if wrested from the ruling powers, tremendous instruments of liberation. In the guise of a tract in support of traditional piety, the prologue in fact attacks its fundamental premise: that piety results in immediate and sure reward (p. 45).

Herein is another strength of the book: he does not focus all of his efforts on the poetic dialogue of Job, assuming that the readers feel entirely comfortable with the prologue. Though describing the problems inherent in the prologus is certainly not original to Penchansky, his ability to review the complexities in economic fashion is commendable (see pp. 37-38).

The final chapter, four, deals with the hermeneutical significance of dissonance. Several of the observations here, among them his avoidance of simplistic explanations for the speeches of Yahweh like "God Himself is the answer" or the "larger plan" answer to Job's questioning are commendable. Following others who opt for a "no answer" he states: "Job's suffering remains unexplained, as does suffering in most of the world" (p. 71).

One weakness of the book is his lack of involvement with the speeches of Yahweh (they receive mention on pp. 48 and 52-53). It is also difficult to see how Yahweh's approval of Job "affirms the blasphemous statements made in the center" (p. 49; on p. 52 he reverses himself and takes the traditional view that God expresses strong disapproval of Job's statements). Yahweh both approves of Job and disapproves of him and a reading of Yahweh's speeches must include both. At times the book reads as if it was a psychological interpretation. This is similar to that which is sometimes used for imprecatory psalms saying that God allows for, even approves of, an open, assertive channeling of frustration and bitterness. It is questionable, however, if the biblical text is quite as radical as Penchansky would have his readers believe.

There are reasons why conservative interpreters will dislike the book such as the redaction criticism that runs throughout it, the assumption that Job is legendary and his view that the Job of the dialogue curses God. But if the book is judged by its own goals, this one achieves its own admirably.

Some strengths in the book have been mentioned above. The real strength, however, is this: when he encounters ambiguity or even conflict in the text, he does not attempt to resolve it but rather asks why it exists, what it accomplishes (or doesn't accomplish), and in this there are lessons even for (perhaps especially for) conservative interpreters. *Betrayal of God* is part of the promising new series entitled "Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation." Publishers that are on the cutting edge of biblical studies are promoting series like this and are to be commended.

RONALD L. GIESE JR.
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

The Old Testament Speaks: A Complete Survey of Old Testament History and Literature 4th ed., by Samuel J. Schultz. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990.

"Balance" is a word that rarely comes to mind when reading Old Testament surveys and introductions. Sometimes the "need to know" is purely apologetic, as if it is more important to know how to defend the OT than to interpret, teach, and apply it. Sometimes the focus is on the OT as background for the New and not as a document worthy of study in its own right. Sometimes the volume is filled with content (dates, names, events, outlines), but fails to emphasize hermeneutics. Perhaps balance is an impossible goal given 39 books to survey, numerous schools of interpretation in biblical studies, and background work in areas such as canon, archaeology, geography, and comparative religion. Marketing blurbs for the eagerly awaited fourth edition of *OT Speaks*, however, claim to meet this goal of overall balance. Additionally, the claim is made that this edition "includes major revisions in the poetical and prophetic books," so as to address the greatest weaknesses in the past editions.

For those unfamiliar with the work a few comments on the previous three editions are in order. *OT Speaks* is fully conservative usually representing only the conservative side. As J. J. Owens said of Schultz in his review of the first edition (*RevExp* 60:1 [1963]:83), "Regularly he exhibits the tendency to accept the 'early dating' of everything. . . ." Names such as E. J. Young, Leon Wood, and Gleason Archer are not uncommon in footnotes and bibliographies. All the editions have been characterized by a dominating focus on history. At over 400 pages, the reader constantly seems to be reading the result of a "two-volume-in-one," that is, a history of Israel (like Bright's) and a book-by-book survey. Unfortunately, the scales are weighted far too heavily on the aspect of history. The book is organized almost entirely along historical lines (e.g., Ch. 13 is "Judah Survives Assyrian Imperialism"). This imbalance has always been the book's major weakness. It leans heavily on history but still wants to be considered a survey of OT literature (hence later in the book are chapter

headings like "Isaiah and his Message"). Yet even in such a chapter, Schultz devotes most of the content to historical rather than theological aspects.

As for the new edition, many professors will look for the above-mentioned revisions in the poetical and prophetic books. Their analysis of this revision will result in continued disappointment. Whereas other surveys (like LaSor/Hubbard/Bush [Eerdmans] and the new Hill/Walton [Zondervan] ones) devote whole chapters to broad genres such as "prophecy" or "wisdom literature," and therefore at least begin to answer such questions as "What is prophecy?" or "What is Hebrew poetry and how do we interpret it?," Schultz has no meaningful discussion of genre criticism. For example, neither the term "poetry" nor the term "prophecy" appear in the name/subject index although they do appear in the volumes named above. Admittedly those volumes are "pure" OT surveys. Nonetheless, the subtitle of *OT Speaks* does include the word "literature," and certainly the publisher (and probably the author) intends for this to be *used* as a survey textbook rather than a reference for OT history. Indeed the book is used globally for basic survey courses.

The new edition's organization and heading for its chapters are unchanged from the first edition (1960). For Schultz the "poetical" books are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs (all in Ch. 17, "Interpretation of Life"). There is extremely little that is new in this chapter versus the third edition. In fact, the section on Psalms (only three full pages) is, completely unchanged from the first edition. Though the dust cover of the fourth edition claims "major" new revisions in the poetical and prophetic books, Schultz's own word on the matter is more on the mark when he speaks of "limited" revisions primarily in the poetical books and the minor prophets (note his preface to fourth edition). Students or professors who have followed *OT Speaks* through its first three editions can expect about the same amount of revision in this stage, which is to say not very much.

"Updated" bibliographies in the fourth edition are similar to the updatings done in the previous editions. For example, for the Psalms, each edition of *OT Speaks* has been updated by dropping one commentary and listing a new one (two are now listed, both in the *Word Biblical Commentary* series—Craigie's on Pss 1–50 and Allen's on Pss 101–150). It is, in fact, difficult to tell what Schultz is aiming at in these bibliographies. Are these works truly recommended or will any commentary do? It is hard to imagine, for instance, that Schultz would recommend Speiser's commentary on Genesis, yet it is listed along with a number of conservative commentaries. A more detailed word in the Preface on the nature and purpose of the bibliographies with perhaps an annotation would have been helpful.

There is an abbreviated version of *OT Speaks* called *Message of the Old Testament* (1986, 197 pages) which is intended for laypersons. It would work well for anyone who has no real control of the OT and who needs to survey its contents without the overwhelming historical data. Its maps and indexes at the back also make this a handy reference to take to a Bible study group.

It should, however, be questioned if literature has really been studied if there is only an analysis of historical background and a summary of contents. For this reason Schultz has not really analyzed the OT as literature. Literary analysis/Genre Criticism seek to answer not the question "What is said?" by

"How is it said?" or "Why is it said this way and not another?" This is the balance that is missing in *OT Speaks* (one which is beginning to be included in other surveys). For instructions at the undergraduate level, "pure" surveys such as LaSor/Hubbard/Bush or the new Hill/Walton are to be recommended over Schultz. In terms of (OT) apologetics (such as dating and authorship) Schultz is very strong and will continue to be more attractive than the sometimes softer stances taken in the other two surveys. If it is impossible to produce a balanced survey, then the instruction of Old Testament simply needs to look at each survey textbook and ask the following question: "Does the imbalance here fit what is needed for this course?"

RONALD L. GIESE JR.
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

The Old Testament Canon in the Old Testament Church: The Internal Rationale for Old Testament Canonicity, by Robert I. Vasholz. Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990. Pp. 120. \$49.95. Cloth.

The focus of this work is upon the process rather than the scope of OT canonicity and since Vasholz understands this to be a matter of authority he concentrates upon the community's recognition of an author as authoritative. There are three areas of emphasis in the book: Moses and the law, the prophets and prediction and the process of transmission.

After a brief mention of evidence for the ancient Near Eastern mentality of canonicity Vasholz begins with Moses, the key figure in his discussion, who is paradigmatic for later authors of Scripture. God's public authentication of Moses as chosen spokesman became the basis for Israel's acceptance of the authority of the legal commands revealed at Sinai. Vasholz briefly discusses support for Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (a point many will see as critical to his whole discussion) and while recognizing the existence of external sources emphasizes that there is only one source of authority. This led to an acceptance of the non-legal material of the Pentateuch as well. Pre-Mosaic material is viewed as being handed down from the Patriarchs while the ultimate source of pre-history is understood to be divine revelation. Vasholz' stress is upon the likelihood of concomitant oral and written sources.

The second concentration of the book is the authority of the prophets which, Vasholz contends, ultimately stems from fulfilled prediction. Prediction is the 'decisive mark' and the 'acid test' of the prophet and the basis for canonicity of their material. While the prophetic call and reputation are mentioned they are de-emphasized as a mark of authority in favor of prediction. Signs and prediction are closely linked as methods of public corroboration by the author but there is little discussion on the difference between the two. Good but brief emphasis is given both to the concept of false prophecy and to recent critical assessments of so-called unfulfilled prophecies.

Vasholz' goal is to examine internal evidence for the authentication of the OT but one weakness is the failure to wrestle with what is not so evident. Little is said about the wisdom literature and anonymous books are said to have been

accepted because "the authors measured up to the objective criteria of their own times," p. 50. Emphasis is upon the prophets' fulfilled prediction but attestation of anonymous prophets is assumed as legitimate "since they are in the company of others who were," p. 56, and short-range predictions without a recorded fulfillment are assumed fulfilled because they were preserved.

The final emphasis of the book is upon the process of transmission; of the text and of the completed canon. These two chapters provide a good summary of some of the material pertinent to the discussion of the preservation of the text. The accuracy and faithfulness of the scribes and the evidence of their work is a major focus with many examples of scribal notation being given. Vasholz rejects F. M. Cross' triad of text types behind the Massoretic Text and sees a continuity of transmission from the time of Ezra until the production of the Massoretic Text with emphasis upon the priests and sanctuary, as well as the written word, in that process. His observation that the captivity was the only prolonged interruption of continuity does not consider the period prior to Josiah's reformation.

Vasholz stays clearly within the OT biblical evidence and given the title he seemingly intends the book to set the stage for the NT canon. His rejection of some of the modern critical presuppositions allows him to see the whole picture and deal with the biblical evidence at face value. His discussion would be greatly enhanced by amplification of the comparative ancient Near Eastern data. Unfortunately the book has a number of minor spelling and printing errors as well as some garbled transliteration of the Hebrew and Greek. While the book is a helpful survey of the biblical data, the narrow focus and price will result in a very limited audience.

ROBERT SPENDER
KING'S COLLEGE

The First Epistle of Peter, by Peter H. Davids, in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. Pp. 266. \$24.95.

The author of this very helpful volume is Professor of New Testament Literature at Canadian Theological Seminary, Regina, Saskatchewan. Many have used with much profit his previous *Commentary on James* in the New International Greek Testament Commentary series. The present volume on First Peter maintains the high standard of excellence in scholarship we have come to expect from Peter Davids' pen.

The opening chapter of introduction contains much valuable information in a most readable style. The common arguments against Petrine authorship are stated and then succinctly but effectively refuted. To the charge that the epistle must be a forgery because it contains too many Paulinisms, Davids asks why it was not pseudonymously attributed to Paul instead of Peter since Paul was known for his letter writing?

Davids proposes that Silvanus may have been authorized by Peter to write in his name (p. 6; comments on 5:13). "... the letter was written ... in the style in which Silvanus was accustomed to writing, that is, Paul's, written with whatever he knew of Peter's teaching and ideas, and attributed to Peter as it should have been" (p. 7).

The author concludes that the letter was written to Christians living in the northwest quadrant of Asia Minor bordering the Black Sea which Paul had not been allowed to evangelize (Acts 16:6-10). He also asserts without qualification that they were largely Gentiles, although a footnote acknowledges the attempts of some to include a Jewish element (p. 8). No notice is taken in the introduction of the problem posed by the use of *χριστιανῶν* in 1:1. In the commentary section, the term is dealt with, and the author concludes that "we find a natural transfer of one of the titles of Israel to the church. ... The church consists of communities of people living outside their native land, which is not Jerusalem or Palestine but the heavenly city" (p. 46). He acknowledges that at this time about one million Jews were living in Palestine and two to four million were outside of it in communities all over the Empire, but no serious consideration is given to the view that *χριστιανῶν* could have here its usual meaning of Jewish communities outside of Palestine. That would have been appreciated by this reviewer.

One especially valuable inclusion in this volume is the excursus, "Suffering in 1 Peter and the New Testament." The Old Testament background of suffering is treated and four conclusions are drawn from it. Then the New Testament data is reviewed and development of the theme from its OT roots is pointed out. Finally, some theological conclusions are drawn from the experience of church history.

The commentary section is characterized by clear and careful discussion, leading the reader to grapple with the text in a knowledgeable way with most of the options set before him. In the notoriously difficult passage of 3:18-22, Davids wrestles with the problem of Jesus and the spirits in prison, and concludes that Peter is contrasting Christ's death with His resurrection. Davids asserts (without proof) that Christ's being made alive in the spirit refers to the resurrection, and not that Christ's spirit or soul was dead and that it alone was made alive. Thus he gets rid of the descent of Christ into Hades prior to the resurrection. He takes no note of the biblically stated fact that during the final hours of darkness on the cross Christ was forsaken by the Father, which is the very essence of spiritual death. Thus the view that the restoration of His spirit to a relationship with the father occurred at the moment of death (Luke 23:46), and that Peter has described what Christ did during those three days before the resurrection may have more to commend it than the author has considered.

In commenting on "the spirits in prison" (3:19), Davids rightly rejects (in this reviewer's opinion) that the reference is to OT saints, or those who died in the flood. He points out that "spirits" in the NT always refers to nonhuman spiritual beings unless qualified. He furthermore identifies the "sons of God" in Gen 6:1-4 as angels who disobeyed God and were subsequently put in prison, the view held in Peter's day and recorded in 1 Enoch. He concludes that Peter is referring to a proclamation of judgment by the resurrected Christ to the

imprisoned spirits (fallen angels), sealing their doom (p. 141). This reviewer would differ only by placing this event during the interval between Christ's death and resurrection, rather than after it.

This volume is a worthy addition to the literature on First Peter, and is heartily recommended.

HOMER A. KENT
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Believer's Bible Commentary (NT), by William MacDonald. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990. Pp. 1205 (i-xxxii). n.p. Cloth.

Written from a Darbyist point of view, this monumental work nonetheless is remarkable for several reasons, and the excursi to be found occasionally inserted relate primarily to the doctrines of ecclesiology, eschatology, and missiology. The excursi are attributed to Arthur Farstad, the executive director of Nelson's New King James Bible Version.

The work is conservatively sound throughout, and no one need hesitate to recommend it for church and Sunday school ministry; it should be in every church library. While the author does not treat many of the Bible's difficult passages concerning interesting, scholarly issues, he does explain such passages in the conservative tradition and the reader is not left dangling between all the possible interpretations of them.

The reader knowledgeable in missions will be puzzled by Farstad's statement: "If all mission board administrators were serving on the mission field, it would greatly reduce the need for personnel there." Since 350,000 missionaries are currently needed on the fields of the world, administrative personnel would make little difference numerically.

MacDonald does not usually offer applications of passages often involved today in discussions about divine healing and other contemporary issues. For example his material on James 5:16a fails to address the importance of the word translated "healed" and its effect upon the overall interpretation.

Several of the excursi are critical of parachurch developments within the church. Perhaps the background of the author helps to explain this. Regardless of this tendency, the volume is sound and trustworthy.

One very minor note: better editorial work would have eliminated many of the passages placed in italics and also the overused exclamation point. In some cases the italics interfered with those used for Greek transliteration. Better balance in the length of excursi is needed. "The Local Church" would have been a better antithesis with "Parachurch" in the excursus entitled, "The House Church and Parachurch Organizations."

All these matters aside, the authors are to be commended for their contribution to the church's resources for teaching and studying the Word of God. A similar production is needed for the Old Testament.

DONALD RICKARDS
NASHVILLE BIBLE COLLEGE

Building Your New Testament Greek Vocabulary, by Robert E. Van Voorst. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. Pp. 110. \$7.95. Paper.

There are an increasing number of books being published which are designed to simplify the learning of NT Greek. In an educational environment where the effort expended, as well as the responsibility for learning, has shifted largely to the teacher and away from the student, everyone teaching NT Greek is looking for simplified "helps." Actual exegesis of the NT text is interesting and self-motivating. However, few would describe the process of learning morphology, syntax or vocabulary in the same terms. Of these three, the study of vocabulary is definitely in competition for being regarded as most tedious. Most Greek teachers hope for or attempt to develop a better and, if possible, painless way to learn the vocabulary of the NT. The methods range from learning vocabulary almost entirely in the text to learning long lists of words by rote memory. Several books have recently been published on the subject of building a Greek NT vocabulary. In 1990, not only was *Building Your New Testament Greek Vocabulary* published, but another on the same general format and approach by Thomas A. Robinson was also published (*Mastering Greek Vocabulary*, Hendrickson Pub.).

Van Voorst is assistant professor of religion at Lycoming College. The paperback volume is pleasant in appearance, handy in format and clear and logical in its layout. Therefore, the book is not daunting to the beginning student. The author states (p. ix) that he seeks to "enable the student to build a vocabulary of New Testament Greek by using the principles of word formation and by drawing on the cognate relationships of most New Testament Greek words." He also states that he desires the student to learn "as easily as possible and in a pedagogically sound manner." (p. x)

Part One, "Guide to Using the Book," is somewhat different than the title leads the user to expect. There are no examples of what the reader can or should do nor are there samples of the entries or specific instructions. Rather, the chapter is more of a general introduction to the book. It is helpful and explains the layout of the book and the reasons for this particular approach. Part Two, "Basic Principles of Greek Word Building," is a helpful chapter. It will be of benefit not only to beginning Greek students but to a larger audience. The various suffixes (nominal, adjectival, adverbial and verbal) are listed along with the various compounds with prepositional and adverbial prefixes. Although this will be of benefit to many, the fact that the prepositions are listed before the vocabulary and that there are numerous prefixes and suffixes requires a great deal of rote memorization. This is particularly true since the student has learned no vocabulary with which to associate these prefixes and suffixes. If the prepositions are learned here, why learn them again under the later sections of the book? The two final parts, Five, "Principal Parts of Selected Important Verbs," and Six, "Numbers," are useful, although "Principal Parts" does not logically come under "vocabulary."

The two main parts of the book are Three, "Vocabulary Listed by Frequency and Cognate," and Four, "Vocabulary Without Cognate, Listed by Frequency." In both of these sections the words are arranged by frequency. If the word has a cognate which occurs at least five times in the NT, it is listed in part Three so as to enhance ease of memorization for cognate words. However,

if the student desires to know all words which occur a certain number of times, he must look in both sections. Therefore, if words are to be studied by frequency both sections must be consulted. In addition, even when studying words of great frequency the student is also confronted with cognates which seldom occur. It would seem easier to list the words purely by frequency and list the cognates if and when they occur.

A second drawback is that some of the cognates are less than obvious. Since this arrangement is solely a memory tool, these not readily apparent cognates would seem to defeat the purpose. Is it any real help in memorizing to list ἀλλάσσω, "change," under ἀλλά, "but" (p. 15), or ἐξαυτῆς, "immediately" under αὐτός, "he, she, it" (p. 16), or γεννάω, "beget" under γίνομαι, "become" (p. 16)? Words such as δῶρον, "gift" and παράδοσις, "tradition," are listed under δίδρμι (p. 16), without any indication that the basic root δο is what ties these words together." Ἐμός, "my" and ἡμέτερος, "our" are listed under ἐγώ, but a footnote is necessary to explain how they are related (p. 17). Unless the participial forms of εἰμί are already known, how will παρουσία be recognized or ὄντως be related to εἰμί (p. 17)? These are not a few isolated instances. While there are many such examples, these connections are obvious only to those who have had some Greek. Although such cognates may need to be listed for the sake of consistency, it would be helpful to list words built on obvious cognates rather than a technically complete list.

The listing of μετανοέω (p. 54) seems backward. The basic root is νοέω, with the preposition μετὰ. However, there is no indication that the basic word is νοέω since it is merely listed under μετανοέω without any indication to facilitate learning. Some indication of the root or stem should be of help.

It is always difficult, after years of teaching Greek, to approach a book as a beginning Greek student might. While this book is helpful for mastering vocabulary, it may be more useful for a teacher than a beginning student. The more interesting and natural way to learn vocabulary still seems to be to learn it in context while translating the Greek NT. If some other method is used, Metzger's *Lexical Aids*, which lists words by frequency, seems the most straightforward approach. The words which are cognate can be noted by the teacher when they occur. The format of this book is pleasing, easy to follow and logical. The suggestions for improvement are based mainly on the fact that in this book the "cognate" tail seems to be wagging the "vocabulary" dog. This somewhat innovative approach may be the proper key for certain teacher-student combinations. For those who prefer to teach vocabulary separate from actual reading in the text, this book is worth a try.

THOMAS R. EDGAR
CAPITAL BIBLE SEMINARY

Apologetics in the New Age: A Christian Critique of Pantheism, by David K. Clark and Norman L. Geisler. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. Pp. 254. \$15.95. Paper.

By its very nature Christian apologetics must be a dynamic discipline. It has changed its strategy many times in the history of the church and will continue to do so as movements continue to challenge the Christian message.

David Clark and Norman Geisler have collaborated to produce a welcomed and much needed apologetic critique of the most recent challenge, New Age pantheism. The dual purpose of *Apologetics in the New Age* is to develop arguments to respond to this new challenge and to demonstrate that pantheism is not rationally plausible. The authors contend that apologetic argumentation appropriate against atheism is inappropriate against pantheism.

The approach is philosophical in that it evaluates the ideas propagated by the pantheistic worldview rather than the bizarre cultural trappings of the New Age movement. Although neither the New Age movement nor its underlying philosophical base is a monolithic structure, the authors have isolated a core of beliefs with which to interact. Their responding to a generic pantheism does not mean that they ignore the specifics of certain pantheistic forms in their critique. The first part is an exposition of the teachings of five major schools of pantheism. The expositions are factual, well-documented and sprinkled with illustrations and biographical data.

The Zen Buddhist philosopher D. T. Suzuki sets forth what Clark and Geisler call permeational pantheism. Suzuki held that monistic unity is experienced in a Life Force that permeates or underlies all reality. The absolute pantheism of the medieval Indian philosopher Shankara taught that only God is real; everything else is an illusion. Absolute pantheism differs from most other schools, which attribute some reality to the physical, whether as lower levels or secondary modes of the universal one. Multilevel pantheism is represented by Sarvepali Radhakrishnan, a modern Indian statesman. Radhakrishnan taught a hierarchy of being with various degrees of reality, each one expressing the Supreme Being. Two examples of Western pantheism are also included, first Plotinus and then Spinoza. Plotinus sets forth emanational pantheism in which the Ultimate overflowed and formed the world, yet without diminishing its fullness. Spinoza held to a modal form of pantheism where the finite world is viewed as various modes of God. Thus, God is identified with substance or with Nature.

Their choice of representative spokespersons is, on the one hand, commendable, for it focuses attention on well developed systems rather than on less sophisticated forms. However, none are typically New Age, as would have been David Spangler, Fritjof Capra, Marilyn Ferguson, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Jean Huston, Mark Satin or Shirley MacLaine. This should not detract from the value of the book, since the ideas of various schools often surface in New Age thinkers. For example, the multilevel pantheism of Radhakrishnan is encountered in Mark Satin's *New Age Politics*.

The second part begins with constructing a corpus of common themes with which to interact. The discussion then turns to methodology. The authors argue that since all facts are interpreted through one's worldview framework, they cannot be called upon to adjudicate between vying positions. They instead appeal to the standards of rationality, which may at first appear counter-productive in dialogue with anyone who rejects the value of reason. Yet, the authors contend that these criteria are common ground, for "pantheists implicitly affirm them in their actions." The criteria include consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness, and congruity. These criteria are then applied in the areas of metaphysics, epistemology, religious experience, and ethics. After reconstructing premises of each theme the authors apply the standards of

rationality and conclude that arguments for pantheism either self-destruct, end up in circular reasoning, or the like. Thus, pantheism is unaffirmable.

The book necessarily forges its own path, as there is a paucity of Christian apologetic works against pantheism with which to interact. It includes a glossary, suggested readings and index. Besides being informative reading for well-read Christians, it could appropriately serve as a supplemental text in courses in Apologetics and Christian Evidences.

RICHARD A. YOUNG
CHATTANOOGA, TN

Revealing the New Age Jesus: Challenges to Orthodox Views of Christ, by Douglas Groothuis. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990. Pp. 264. \$9.95. Paper.

Many of those who confront the cults on a regular basis have been delighted with the former publications authored by Groothuis (*Unmasking the New Age* and *Confronting the New Age*). The appearance of another excellent volume from this author will add to that readership.

This work is thoroughly documented, placing footnotes and bibliography at the end of each chapter, while reserving categorical bibliographies following the Appendix. These are very helpful to researchers as is also the limited and selected index concluding the work.

In his initial chapter, "Who do you say that I am?," Groothuis establishes the diversity of New Age views regarding the person of Christ. This diversity constitutes a "family of related views, all sharing the same bloodline despite certain genetic idiosyncrasies." He then describes seven understandings held by "newagers."

The following chapters concentrate on the controversy over Christ by comparing rival truth claims about his identity and teaching. These titles such as "Jesus and Gnosis," "The Lost Years of Jesus," "Was Jesus an Essene," "Jesus of the Spirits," "Jesus and the Cosmic Christ" are indicative of New Age approaches to the person of Jesus.

Three chapters present the Biblical evidence for who Jesus Christ is: "Christ and Christianity: Jesus' Life and Teaching," "Claims and Credentials of Christ" and "The New Testament Witness to Jesus." At the end of the volume is an excellent appendix on the New Testament Canon.

Groothuis' readers will not be disappointed with this pithy work. It is to be commended to all who are seeking "the truth as it is in Jesus."

DONALD R. RICKARDS
NASHVILLE BIBLE COLLEGE

The Last Days Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Understanding the Different Views of Prophecy. Who believes what about prophecy and why, by Robert P. Lightner. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990. Pp. 223. n.p. Paper.

Can another book on prophecy add an important contribution to the flood of materials already published in the general purview of eschatology?

What will Lightner's book accomplish in the unceasing debate over views and positions that rages among evangelical believers?

The author very pointedly attempts to answer these questions in his first chapter entitled, "Another Book on Prophecy?" He states that the information he has published "will surely not solve all the problems, eliminate all the differences, and bring about a cessation of the war over eschatology among evangelicals" (p. 25). Lightner lists four reasons for writing another book on prophecy: 1) to outline the various evangelical views concerning the future; 2) to explore and explain the reasons for differences; 3) to inform the layperson of the intense battle and offer a solution; 4) to urge evangelicals to practice Christian love toward each other in eschatology just as it is to be practiced in every other area of Christian truth and living.

With these lofty goals firmly in place, Lightner takes the reader on a lengthy review of the major unfulfilled prophecies in Scripture in which evangelicals find agreement. These topics are briefly defined and discussed. Included in this area are: the immortality of the soul, the intermediate state, the future bodily resurrection, future divine judgment, the future return of Christ and the eternal state.

In part two, Lightner outlines three major systems of eschatology that have produced disagreement among evangelicals. Using a series of charts excellent in their clarity, he defines each system and discusses the variant views which have arisen within each one. The section ends with a summary in chapter six of the differences between the groups.

Part four contains two chapters which discuss the major reasons for the different views. Some of the issues which Lightner says produce the differences are the methods of interpreting some of the unfulfilled prophecies of Scripture as well as the variant views of the relation of the church to the coming Great Tribulation. He also clearly outlines how a controversy exists over the nature of the Old Testament covenants (conditional vs. unconditional) and how this difference impacts one's position. Lightner closes this section with a very transparent chapter on why the differences persist. He suggests such diverse reasons as semantics; lack of (or possession of mistaken) information; spiritual sins such as pride, stubbornness, selfishness and prejudice; and escapist and martyr mentalities. All who hold tenaciously to a particular position would do well to read this chapter with humble sincerity.

The last part addresses the differences by suggesting some positive and negative action steps that need to be taken. Convictions need to be affirmed but with a spirit of love for those who differ. The author refers to the fascinating practice of rural Japanese children called "pillow education" as a possible way to ease the tensions between believers (pp. 183-84). Would to God the feelings over the issues could be reduced this easily.

Several features in this handbook are very beneficial for the student of eschatology. At the end of nearly every chapter a series of questions, listed under the heading "For Further Thought," provide thought-provoking questions and take the information out of the realm of theory, forcing the reader to make a practical application. Also, the chapters end with a section called "Digging Deeper." Additional information about current views and their proponents revealed that the author has an excellent grasp of all the latest evangelical positions. In fact, the author outlined such recent issues as the

pre-wrath rapture, theonomy—postmillennial theology and developing trends in dispensationalism. He gave the essence of the most recent journal articles and latest books on eschatology.

The up-to-date nature of all these views presented in such a simple and clear fashion will surely make this book a popular study help among laypeople, especially for the next few years. For those who want a deeper understanding, the annotated bibliography, graded according to the difficulty of the listed books, will be very helpful. Also, the overall completeness of the information presented is quite amazing for the brevity of the book.

Does the book accomplish Lightner's stated purposes? Only time will tell. In spite of the fact that the volume is a handbook, more scripture could have been recorded to demonstrate what biblical support each position has. Some may wonder if the use of the NKJV (rather than the NIV which might fit more comfortably the level of the book) is a concession to the publisher as much as a conviction of the author. The big question is whether the book will really bring more understanding or more confusion. Will a layperson in a typical church be able to sort out his personal scriptural view of eschatology as a result of reading this book? The reviewer doubts that this will be the general consequence. Rather, greater disillusionment and discouragement will probably result when people realize how really confusing the issues are and that respected evangelical scholars cannot agree. Hopefully, laypeople will not turn from studying the Scriptures as a result. Will the tone of the rhetoric between the factions mellow because this book has been published? May scholars such as Lightner take the lead so that many others will follow.

MARVIN BRUBACHER
LONDON BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Historical Criticism of the Bible: Methodology or Ideology? by Eta Linnemann. Translated by Robert W. Yarbrough from the German edition, *Wissenschaft oder Meinung? Anfragen und Alternativen*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990. Pp. 159. \$9.95.

Eta Linnemann had a successful career as an academic in theology. Her first book became a best-seller. She completed the requirements for a university lectureship, and became professor of theology and religious education at Braunschweig Technical University in West Germany. Because of the wide recognition her scholarly work received, she was inducted into the Society for New Testament Studies.

Despite her successful achievements in the scholarly theological and New Testament world of Germany, she became disillusioned. She concluded that scientific work on the biblical text would produce no truth nor would it serve the gospel.

Linnemann attempted to escape her disillusionment. She became a slave to television viewing, all the while moving toward a state of alcohol dependence. However, through the help of some new Christian friends, she entrusted her life to Jesus.

In her words, she repented of the sin of her past teaching and writing, even throwing her books and other writings into the trash. She advises others do to the same, for she counts all that she did before entrusting her life to Jesus as refuse.

The matter of which she primarily repented was her work in historical-critical theology. Linnemann believes that historical-critical theology is a monopolistic system based on philosophies which defined truth in such a way that God's Word, the Bible, was excluded as the source of truth. She does indeed believe that historical-critical theology is an ideology, not a methodology.

Her book is divided into two parts: Part 1: Christianity and the Modern University, and Part 2: God's Word and Historical-Critical Theology. She attacks the modern university in Western culture as having pagan roots. The first Western university began in Bologna, Italy, for the purpose of studying civil law. As a whole the laws studied came from pre-Christian, pagan contexts. The second university, founded in Paris, was for the purpose of studying the writings of Aristotle, a pagan philosopher.

She then traces the influences in universities through scholasticism, humanism, the Enlightenment, and German idealism. While humanism and the early Enlightenment did not consciously advocate a break with the Christian faith, such was the result anyway.

Consequently, Linnemann sees the modern university as basically a pagan one, and advocates that Christians separate themselves from it. She believes Christians should establish education centers based on God's Word, the Bible. God's Word should be kept at the center. The relationship of various disciplines to the truth of the Bible should be taken seriously. She lists ten elements around which the curriculum and university experience should be constructed (p. 62), including elements ranging from dynamic fellowship under God's Word to sports and meaningful leisure time.

In Part 2, Linnemann prefers to discuss historical-critical theology rather than methodology. One of the major flaws of this theology resides, says Linnemann, in the view that theology is science, and research is conducted "*ut si Deus non daretur*" ('as if there were no God')" (p. 84). Consequently, although the Word could bear witness to the reality of God, God is excluded from the beginning.

Linnemann sees historical-critical theology as a closed system, which began not from foolproof data but by intuition. Then additional information was added which seemed to support the intuition. Intuition moved to a defined conception. The whole process then passed into an established tradition. Later, the established tradition had variation, but the tradition became the framework of truth.

Next, the whole framework became a scientific discipline. Opposition or contrasting idea, or old idea, which may be true, had not chance of being taken seriously because they stood outside the tradition. Students who now come into the modern university system are made to conform to the discipline, or they cannot function fully. Thus, the establishment of new educational centers are necessary because present systems are hopelessly flawed.

Linnemann's book challenges readers to examine their basic assumptions by which they approach the interpretation of Scriptures and their own personal experiences. Readers may wish that Linnemann had given some more discussion, after rejecting historical-critical theology, as to whether historical-critical methodology has any value.

Also, how are faith and truth to act and react in reference to modern science and technology? She touches on these matters, but these themes are developed only slightly. What is the new hermeneutic to be? What about those who have a faith-relationship with Christ, in the same salvational sense that she does, who may find some value in historical-critical methodology?

Other questions could be raised, but readers need to remember that this is not an academic book although she deals with matters of academic interest. According to the translator, Linnemann is to deal with the subject academically in a forthcoming book.

Also, readers need to remember that she is writing in the German context where theology is taught in public schools and universities. Her comments often reflect that context more than the world context.

However, this is a remarkable book. Behind all the discussion is the glowing light of a passionate pilgrimage which began when she entrusted her life to Jesus. While readers may not agree with her at several or many points, there is a need to listen to this prophetic call to repentance and look for more discussion from this "Bultmannian turned evangelical."

JOE BLAIR

UNION UNIVERSITY, JACKSON, TN

Metaphysics and the Idea of God, by Wolfhart Pannenberg, translated by Philip Clayton. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990. Pp. 170. \$21.95. Cloth.

This volume contains translations of the five lectures and one appended essay that comprise Pannenberg's *Metaphysik und Gottesgedanke* (1988) as well as two supplementary essays not included in the German original. Allowing for what may well be the inherent obscurity of the author's thought, the translator has produced a clear and readable text. The eight interlocking chapters of *Metaphysics and the Idea of God* constitute a sustained attempt to demonstrate that Christian theology neither can nor ought to be separated from the Western metaphysical tradition. On Pannenberg's view, it is inquiry into the ultimate reality of a unified meaningful world presupposed by human experience that delivers Christian theology from subjectivism and provides it with rational, objective criteria for any adequate idea of God. Philosophy and religion converge in the quest for an interpretation of life that transcends ordinary unreflective consciousness and explains human experience as arising out of an objectively-unified, objectively-meaningful world. Contrary to widely-held views, Pannenberg insists that metaphysical speculation did not represent a foreign intrusion into the Christian tradition. Instead, early Christians' interpretations of the God of the Bible as the God of the late-Platonic

philosophers was a necessary condition for portraying the God of Israel as the God of all humankind.

Pannenberg believes that an examination of the metaphysical tradition reveals that the idea of God is inescapable in serious thought about the nature of the world and the possibility of our knowledge of it. In both Descartes and Kant knowledge of finite things presupposes a concept of the infinite. This, Pannenberg believes, is an inexplicit idea of God that can be rendered explicit only with the resources of a religious tradition in which God is revealed as personal and volitional, as a holy will acting in history. But Hegel, who sought to take account of the Christian tradition in formulating his idea of the Absolute, fails to adequately account for the transcendence of a God who is also immanent. Pannenberg traces Hegel's failure to his having ultimately drawn his idea of Spirit from the phenomenon of human self-consciousness. Knowledge of God, Pannenberg insists, must ultimately be grounded in objective reality, not in the subjectivity of human experience. Appealing to the work of William James, Pannenberg goes on to argue that even one's experience of oneself as a unified self is possible only subsequent to experience to objects, and that the Kantian claim that the self and the objects of empirical knowledge come into being concurrently is mistaken. The unity of subjective experience that constitutes the human self is possible only because humans experience a unified cosmos. But this in turn is possible only because there is one God who is the creator of this unified cosmos and the subjectivities existing within it.

Turning to the temporal character of human experience, Pannenberg contends that attempts to derive the idea of time from the ontological structure of human existence are bound to fail. The only way to know human existence as a temporally unified whole is not, as Heidegger taught, to project oneself into the perspective of the anticipated but never-experienced non-existence of death, but as Plotinus and Augustine realized, to view one's life from the perspective of a possible participation in the Eternal. On Pannenberg's account, just as we need the idea of the Infinite to know finite objects, we need the idea of Eternity to understand time. He adopts Dilthey's historicist critique of the metaphysical tradition, particularly his claim that all human knowledge is conjectural and is radically conditioned by our existing in a particular present rather than in the future. Pannenberg informs us that it is possible for the future to be present now in the sense that if what we now conjecture will in fact occur, then this future reality is with us now, in the mode of anticipation. Pannenberg hopes to use this idea to forge a close connection between philosophical reflection and the biblical experience of reality, maintaining that this philosophical insight is exemplified in a central theme of Christian theology. What things really are and mean will be revealed only in the eschatological summation of God's action in history. Things are now, but only by way of anticipation, what they will be shown to be in the coming Kingdom of God. This discussion of temporality goes some distance toward exhibiting the metaphysical assumptions behind his views on the Kingdom of God and to some extent clarifies his difficult claims about the futurity of God.

Although Pannenberg has an affinity for process thought in general, he is appreciatively critical of Whitehead. He argues here that Whitehead's atomism, found in his doctrine that "actual entities" are the fundamental components of

reality, and his subjectivism, implicit in his theory of "prehensions," cannot finally be reconciled with the Christian confession of a transcendent God who not only accounts for the unity of the cosmos but is its creator. This clarification of Pannenberg's relation to process theology is especially helpful in locating him on the map of contemporary theology.

This book will not be much help to those who seek to understand the content of Pannenberg's idea of God and its relation to the God revealed in Holy Scripture. Theological readers would be advised to pursue that issue in his systematic theology. Philosophers of religion will no doubt find him to be on occasion obscure, and generally lacking in conceptual clarity and argumentative rigor. It would be helpful, for example, to know precisely what Pannenberg means by the "unity of the world," and one would like to know what (if any) is the literal truth in his claims about the "presence of the future." Despite these limitations, this very influential theologian's explorations of the historical and conceptual connections between the metaphysical tradition and theism generate insights that are often intriguing and sometimes illuminating. Evangelicals and other conservative Christians will applaud his determination to avoid basing all of theology in subjective experience and welcome his theological project of grounding theological knowledge in God's action in human history. The question these essays and lectures leave is whether in his attempt to do this Pannenberg has avoided letting natural theology and the generic theism it undergirds take the place of the God of biblical revelation.

DONALD H. WACOME
THE KING'S COLLEGE

Inscription and Reflections: Essays in Philosophical Theology, by Robert P. Scharlemann, University Press of Virginia, 1989. Pp. 254.

As the subtitle of this work indicates this is a series of previously published essays brought together as varied expressions of a unique, radical and rigorous theological agenda. As Robert Scharlemann, Commonwealth Professor of Philosophical Theology at the University of Virginia says in his "preface," "... the task of theology is to say that it is to inscribe the name 'God' upon every event, and the judgment 'God is God' upon any identity." These essays reflect that task. Scharlemann's purpose is to rethink the whole question of philosophical theology by understanding the task of theology as an "after-thinking" (*metanoesis*; cf., the first essays titled "Onto- and Theo-logical Thinking") and inversion of ontology. In this task he is much indebted to Martin Heidegger, Paul Ricoeur, G. W. F. Hegel and the French deconstructionists (Derrida) as well as his primary theological mentor Paul Tillich. Yet it is also important to note the influential role played by the early Karl Barth (up to 1931) as he sought to radically think through the theological task.

This is no book for the beginner or the "intermediate" in things theological, philosophical or linguistic. A number of passages may have to be read and re-read in order to follow the complex and philosophically demanding line

of thought. Much is required of the reader. Constant engagement and mental grappling are wearying at times, yet the book is stimulating and stretching. This is especially true in the first half of the book. In a crucial statement in the first essay Scharlemann states his point in a way that illustrates some assertions. He says, after details interactive discussion and analysis that:

This leads me to propose that theological thinking is an inversion of ontological thinking, so that to think theologically is to think of the thinking of being (ontology) not as our thinking of being but as the being of God when God is not being God (p. 10).

This evidences some of the complexity and difficulty as well as its very point of interest, demand and provocative uniqueness. This theological thinking which Scharlemann calls "afterthinking," this "overturning of the ontological so as to think the thinking of *being not* as *our* thinking of *being* but as the *being of God* when God is *not* being *God*," is both theological and *christological*. The *being* of God when God is *not being God* is when God is Christ, God's being as *human* being for us.

For the prepared reader, as noted above, this stimulating series of essays requires a redirecting of thought which is always difficult. It can be downright unnerving, as well as perplexing at times, yet it does (if an allusion to Heidegger is allowed) heal "forgetfulness" and asks the "unasked question." But there is far more here. Those somewhat familiar with Scharlemann's ground breaking work (cf. *The Being of God: Theology and the Experience of Truth*) may simply think of Scharlemann as a philosopher of religion or a radical religious thinker whose notions do not relate to the issues of faith in Christ, God's salvation. This observation of Scharlemann is not accurate. A better way of stating the case (which may be surprising to many on various sides) is that Robert Scharlemann's thought is radically confessional. Here is a man who is uniquely wrestling with the issues of "the faith" in relation to current philosophical, hermeneutical and linguistic issues in ways unknown to others. To wrestle with the content of the faith and its relation to and concrete instantiation in theological language—especially the word "God," is admirable. He is attempting to open whole new possibilities for faith and understanding. The first eight essays are especially effective in contributing to this goal.

There are, however, aspects to this collection of essays that are less positive. On the more mundane level, several essays seemed to be less interesting than those in the first half, although that is primarily a point of taste. More to the point (especially in the last few essays), the strong strain of Tillich and the "God"/"One" of Plotinus as a warrant for religious pluralism is emphatically problematic. This is a central viewpoint throughout the essays but it is more distastefully present at the end. Also, such articles as his "Argument from Faith to History," which seems to be related methodologically to Barth's work on Anselm, is unconvincing. Though it elicits a response similar to Hartshorne's statement on the so-called "ontological argument," it leaves the believer invulnerable and is all quite unreal. Further, the view that Jesus become an amorphous "depth of actual freedom," while suggestive and insightful in relation to redemption, is insufficient in light of the actual incarnate

movement of God in human history and for human redemption. In spite of the positive comments above, it is still necessary to follow Pascal, the French mathematician-philosopher in his view, "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not the God of the philosophers."

JOHN MORRISON
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

The Dawn's Early Light, by Joseph M. Stowell. Chicago: Moody Press, 1990. Pp. 178. n.p. Cloth.

In this book, Joseph Stowell, President of Moody Bible Institute, seeks to build on Francis Schaeffer's prophecy of a "post Christian era" . . . that would become increasingly hostile to believers" (p. 9). His purpose is to help Christians know how to live in this new era (p. 10).

The book contains a series of popular treatises dealing with various aspects of living "Christianly" in an ever increasing darkening world (p. 10). He considers matters such as courage and persistence in confronting the darkness, right thinking about values, morals and people, and the place of Scripture as the agent of change and satisfaction.

One thought-provoking chapter addresses the purpose for living built on the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:26. Here he develops the notion of man being the image-bearer of God with the consequent necessity of "reflecting" God, "ruling" creation appropriately, and "responding" correctly to God's rule (pp. 75-78). Christian living and thinking not often in the popular realm are taken back to this proper foundation point.

He further discusses the handling of difficulties in life, the biblical perspective of power and success, appropriate new covenant worship and a response of compassion to our world. In a postscript he portrays the danger of the church caught unprepared to face the modern world using the image of the fabled Rip Van Winkle.

The fundamental issue throughout the book is "right thinking" and that we are "contaminated in our way of thinking" (p. 30). He writes, "We can't appropriately talk about right moral codes and right laws until we have first disciplined our minds to think sacredly instead of secularly" (p. 31). This premise is well taken. The church needs to hear more of the power and centrality of the mind when it comes to reflecting and practicing biblical values.

A most intriguing comment is found on p. 10 where Stowell asserts the premise that if Christians will live according to the principles outlined in the book then "what appears as dusk turning to darkness could actually be the first rays of a new dawn." The same premise is reflected in the title of the book. In light of the fairly serious treatment of 2 Timothy 3, as well as the postmillennial overtones of such a remark, this seems to introduce some confusion as to the place of the church and its members in the world. However, outside of the postscript where he returns to the notion, the balance of the book does not advance this premise, presenting instead exhortations and instructions on personal godly living.

Stowell affirms many of the important and traditional values of the Christian faith. These include the spirit of servanthood, biblical morality, the centrality of Scripture, the failure of materialistic satisfaction and the importance of the family. His remarks concerning the "fatal distraction" of "worshiping in the temple of temporal gain" and its cost to the family are particularly well received (p. 126).

Stowell writes in an easy conversational style with many anecdotes and illustrations. The book is geared to the popular audience and does not pretend to be a thorough-going treatise of any of the issues discussed. In several places there is a need for documentation of various quotations and anecdotes. Given the popular nature of the book, however, this is not a serious concern.

Stowell has made a helpful contribution for pastors to read for their own profit and to recommend to their congregations for the encouragement of appropriate Christian living in the world.

DAVID J. BARKER
LONDON BAPTIST SEMINARY

Why? On Suffering, Guilt, and God, by A. Van de Beek. Translated by John Vriend. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990. Pp. 349. \$21.95.

Suffering and guilt do exist and people wonder why they exist in the light of the Christian claim that there is an all-powerful and all-good God. How could such a God allow suffering and guilt?

Van de Beek presents an answer. His goal is to point to a way in which the believer can live with God's relationship to suffering and guilt. Before he presents his own theodicy, he discusses various models already used to explain the relation between an all-powerful and all-good God, or God who lacks of one of these characteristics, to good and evil. He does an excellent job of discussing the various theodicies, bringing in the relevant biblical material and views of imminent theologians as he does so.

Van de Beek's own theodicy is an effort to frame and interpret a model that will do justice to the biblical material which has given rise to the various theodicies. He suggests that no single model can contain the fullness of God, nor can the thought capacity of a single person. He believes that the biblical revelation does not present a single model, and neither can the models be put side by side in relationship in order to form a single model.

Rather, "the criterion is the acts of God. God's deeds tell us who God is" (p. 258). God is the God of history. The God of history ultimately is Jesus Christ. But it must be remembered that God did not perform one act but many, and every new event calls for new reflection. While these events may be connected, each has its own independence with history.

God is the same, but he does act differently at different points in history. All the events cannot be put together to come up with *the* omnipotence of God or *the* goodness of God, for the goodness and omnipotence of God must be considered for that given moment of history. Thus, van de Beek is led to an inevitable conclusion: God is changeable.

God's acts change, not God. The biblical word is faithfulness. He is true to his promises by the deeds that he does. God is a variable God, but he has unchanging fidelity to the life which he has created.

God is beyond full comprehension. He goes his own way. Good and evil both come from his hand. At the given moment, the act of God cannot be judged as good or bad, but only in the light of some new event of God by which the old event can be judged. In the process, God never reverses himself completely but takes along something of the old.

The last, or ultimate, decisive choice of God was Jesus Christ. Jesus identified himself with the outcasts—the publicans, the whores and other wretched sinners. At the cross, God did turn his back on Jesus and in so doing turned his back on those whom Jesus included—wretched, suffering, sinning humanity.

At the death of Jesus, it was all or nothing. The one person whom God affirmed, Jesus, gave God a choice: choose suffering humanity (all of us) whom Jesus included in his life and death or reject Jesus and all those with whom he identified. In that moment of history, the destiny of humanity skirted on the very abyss of ultimate destruction. At the death of Jesus, the deity of God went under, and heaven was still for three days while God made a decision. God decided to choose light and life and salvation as he always had. God chose Christ after those three days, raising him from the dead.

After creation, God began to act in relation to the world as an angry judge. But God also was faithful to the relationship with people. God's wrath is not past because he still strikes out at people. But his wrath is now serviceable to the kingdom, or now serviceable to the mature freedom of the love he has for his children. So even suffering works toward the way of grace.

Sin, and consequently suffering and guilt, continue to exist but only because the eschaton is delayed. So why does God delay the eschaton? Because the choice of God in Jesus Christ must be made known. God has chosen "mission" to humanity, and the Spirit has time to work this mission of God's Spirit, which is the human history of peace, grace, and life. Humans are allowed to choose with God in his grace and the bringing of the kingdom.

Van de Beek's argument throughout the book takes a direct course to Jesus Christ. But the argument does seem to follow a strange course and reaches some unusual conclusions along the way. Evil and suffering come from the hand of God. God, however, always preserved his people because he was faithful to them. God made an ultimate choice in Jesus Christ, which choice means that now God must act with grace and life consistently. Suffering and evil exist now because the eschaton is delayed (God's choice defeated evil). The eschaton is delayed so the people will have the opportunity to know about God's choice in Jesus Christ. People can choose to participate in the love and grace of God, thus living with God in the choice he has made in Christ.

However, van de Beek's own model is inadequate. Since he begins with the tenet that all things come from the hand of God, God is going to end up bad no matter what the model. If, for example, God blesses me immeasurably (which he has), and then out of anger swats my loved one into oblivion, then God's goodness becomes unconvincing to me. Try as he may, God cannot convince me of his goodness although he has convinced me of his power. To

me that view of God does not correspond to God's ultimate revelation of himself in his Son. Everything does not come from the hand of God.

Finally, his view has Jesus coming along and forcing God to grow up, although van de Beek views them as one and the same. Van de Beek has Jesus convincing God to love sinners. God does, but he has to think about it for three days while Jesus is in the tomb. Again, he is forced to come to that conclusion because God as a changeable God, which is van de Beek's position, has to be reconciled with Jesus Christ. Some of the theodicies van de Beek finds lacking are stronger, in my opinion, than his model.

JOE BLAIR

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Billy Sunday and the Redemption of Urban America, by Lyle W. Dorsett. In the Library of Religious Biography edited by Mark A. Noll and Nathan O. Hatch. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. Pp. 212. n.p. Paper.

Some who have written of Rev. William A. Sunday present him as something of an evangelical Superman, capable of bounding over tabernacles with a single leap, defeating sin and the Devil at every turn. Others seem him at the opposite end of the spectrum, an uneducated opportunist, a man who captured both the attention and the wallets of America, a man whose life placed a blot upon the testimony of Christ. Dorsett, a professor of history and director of urban studies at Wheaton College, admits there are elements of truth in both perspectives of Sunday, but he has allowed neither his evangelical viewpoint nor his admitted admiration of Sunday to stand in the way of a balanced presentation. According to Dorsett, Sunday was guilty of gross ignorance, oversimplifying profound truth, playing to the crowd, spoiling his children, and placing too much emphasis on money. At the same time, Sunday was a sincere man whose life was unalterably changed for the better by his response to the Gospel, generous to the needy, "constrained by an obsession to tell others how Jesus Christ gave him a new life of meaning, peace, and hope."

Dorsett believes another biography of Sunday is justified because nearly thirty years have passed since the last one was published and today's reader asks questions which differ from those asked three decades ago. In addition, Dorsett had access to the Sunday family papers and personal correspondence which were not available in their entirety until after Mrs. Sunday's death in 1957. This source has added breadth and depth to Dorsett's portrait of Sunday, allowing some new insights into the evangelist's life which are not present in earlier works.

The book follows the guidelines of the Library of Religious Biography which intends to publish "well-written narratives devoid of footnotes and academic jargon." Dorsett does include a seven page section, "Notes on Sources." This section lists resources which go beyond the usual bibliographies on Sunday, works which aid one's understanding of the times in which Sunday ministered; e.g., Lewis Atherton's *Main Street on the Middle Border*.

The author writes with a crisp style and presents historical fact enlivened with personal details of Sunday and his family that makes for interesting reading. One has little difficulty finishing the book. The title may be somewhat misleading, however, since the book deals with the redemption of urban America only from the standpoint of the choices Sunday made and the results of those choices when he stopped holding evangelistic meetings in small towns and began them in larger cities. Dorsett does not explore major changes in a city or area which might be attributed to the fact that Sunday had been there for 8-10 weeks. Many argue, for example, that Sunday's meetings in Detroit in the Fall of 1916 so changed people's values in that area that the Dry vote carried the election when Michigan voted on Prohibition later that year. The inclusion of additional specifics of this nature for other cities, especially the New York City meetings of 1917 which some believe were the apex of Sunday's ministry, would have strengthened the book and better fulfilled the promise of the title. The redemption of urban America is only examined from the perspective of the effort and organization demanded by preaching 69 revival meetings in 68 different cities from 1908 to 1920. Dorsett does include a chapter entitled "Legacy" which examines some of the more general contributions made by Sunday and seeks to explain Sunday's decline in popularity. The question of how urban America was changed as the result of Sunday having been there gets short notice, however.

In spite of the criticism, the book's depth and breadth of biographical material, its interesting style, and its chapter on sources make the book worth reading.

DAVID F. COLMAN
GRAND RAPIDS BAPTIST SEMINARY

The Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, by Everett Ferguson, editor, with Michael P. McHugh, Frederick W. Norris, and David M. Scholer. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990. Pp. 983. \$95.00

The appearance of this reference work is a significant publishing event. In 977 articles 135 contributors have covered the first 600 years of Christian history on topics which range from ABORTION to ZOSIMUS. Entries, of course, vary in quantity and quality, but almost all are clear, concise, and reliable. Following each topic covered is a bibliography of primary and secondary sources to guide readers into further research. The material deals with persons, places, events, doctrines, liturgies, customs, institutions, and controversies, and there are a few articles about modern scholars who have made noteworthy contributions to the study of this era. Numerous illustrations appear at appropriate places in the text.

Everett Ferguson, Professor of Church History at Abilene Christian University, is the editor of this project, and his own doctrinal persuasion is evident in the crucial articles that deal with the sacraments. He wrote the ones about Baptism and the Eucharist himself. Many readers of *Grace Theological Journal* will be pleased to know that he contends for trine immersion as the original mode of Baptism. They will, however, be dismayed to learn that he connects

that ordinance (sacrament) closely with the forgiveness of sins. In his rejection of infant Baptism Ferguson gives no recognition to the important studies of John Murray, *Christian Baptism*, and Joachim Jeremias, *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*. This encyclopedia contains an article on Pedobaptism, but the author is E. Glenn Hinson, a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Fairness would seem to dictate that this subject be assigned to an advocate of infant Baptism. Hinson has, nevertheless, demonstrated remarkable objectivity in treating this controversial topic.

The doctrinal articles are among the most substantial ones in this book. Each one traces the development of Christian thinking about the particular belief from the New Testament through the Church Fathers and, where appropriate, through the decisions of church councils. The entries entitled ANTHROPOLOGY, CHRISTOLOGY, and ORIGINAL SIN are especially full and helpful. Jonathan Black's seven-page article GOD helpfully compares and contrasts Greco-Roman and Christian conceptions and cites numerous early attestations to the deity of Christ. One might wonder, however, about Black's treatment of the *kenosis* passage in Philippians 2:6-7. The statement, "Although he [Christ] originally possessed equality with God or *could acquire it*, he 'emptied himself' of the divine attributes" (p. 377, emphasis reviewer's), will surely encounter vigorous disagreement.

In this day of great concern about Antisemitism, Robin Darling Young has produced a commendably balanced treatment of the early church in its relations with hostile Jews. His article JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY is a model of fair, dispassionate coverage of an often vexing subject.

Because of the broadly composite nature of the *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, one should not expect to find a doctrinal consensus among its contributors. Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox scholars have participated in this project. It appears that only a few of the Protestant authors represent the conservative/evangelical persuasion. This is apparent in the bibliographies, which seldom mention the publications of scholars who adhere to the historic, orthodox view of the faith. This is a serious omission, one which detracts from the value of this work. The *Encyclopedia* is, nevertheless, a useful compendium of information about the formative centuries of Christian history, and it belongs in the library of all historians, theologians, and pastors.

JAMES EDWARD MCGOLDRICK
CEDARVILLE COLLEGE

Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the 1980s, edited by Mark A. Noll. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990. Pp. 401. \$14.95. Paper.

This book contains seventeen essays originally presented at a 1988 Wheaton College Institute for the Study of American Evangelicalism conference. The articles discuss the place of religious conviction in a pluralistic democracy characterized by an institutional separation of church and state.

The editor states the authors' guiding assumption that the book describes the place of religion "within the network of other grounding circumstances." In this equation, culture is not "religion externalized." Rather, "religion is usually only one among other important factors providing the deep structure for America's political life" (p. 8). This of course depends upon how one defines religion, and this perspective may explain why some authors seem to be surprised that understanding religion is indeed important to a more complete picture of historic and contemporary American political reality.

John M. Murrin applies the assumption by contending that early Americans came not for religious freedom but to advance their own orthodoxies. Weak governments, he believes, explain why colonists who did not seek religious freedom got it anyway. Consequently, the American experience is defined by an ever-present interaction between the "orthodox" and the "skeptics." Similarly, Robert Wuthnow laments the chasm between religious liberals and conservatives, something now exacerbated by political debate, and explains this chasm in terms of the cultural environment.

John F. Wilson believes that the church-state questions of the new republic were solved not on the basis of philosophical and theological doctrines but due to political necessities. He demonstrates that two paradigms govern current interpretation of how the Constitution regulates the relationship of religion to the federal regime: separationist and accommodationist. For separationists, religious liberty is defined as the absence of government restraint upon individuals. For accommodationists, religious liberty is a basic communal right that should be encouraged by government. Both perspectives are needed to undergird the theory of limited government.

Daniel Walker Howe's conclusion counters the idea that religion is of limited historical import or impact. He argues that the religion of the antebellum period was far from reactionary as some today believe. Religion was an engine driving rational change, a force of modernization. He admirably believes that historians who are themselves Christians should "affirm and explain the political rationality of religious commitment" (p. 138).

One of the more outstanding essays is a fascinating article by George A. Rawlyk discussing the relationship of religion and politics in the Canadian experience. His description of the Canadian response to the psyche of American "Manifest Destiny," the dogma of supreme self-assurance and ambition, is especially enlightening. Rawlyk concludes that the ongoing strength of Democratic socialism in Canada is partly due to its status as a counterrevolution to America.

In an afterword, George M. Marsden discusses the search for an American consensus arguing that the United States is comprised of tribally divided ethnoreligious groups. Religion, he believes, has been working against political consensus in the 1980s. Marsden's bias contradicts the editor's introductory claim of objectivity based on informed historical judgment. Marsden refers to the "conservative exclusivist vision" and favorably quotes Wuthnow who believes that the liberal vision "challenges Americans to act on behalf of all humanity rather than their own interests alone" (p. 389).

With the exception of the Rawlyk article, this book does not offer many new insights. However, the essays do not stray from the appointed topic, and they contribute a wealth of scholarly bibliographic material. Readers interested in the subject will enjoy the text.

REX M. ROGERS
THE KING'S COLLEGE

The Closing of the American Heart: What's Really Wrong With America's Schools, by Ronald H. Nash. Dallas: Probe Ministries International, Word Publishing, 1990. Pp. 235. \$14.99. Cloth.

Ronald Nash's text is another Allan Bloom-like work on education, complete with a proposed curriculum and a list of "must read" great books. Nash expresses considerable despair at the content and direction of American education and anger and resentment toward people he believes are responsible for the contemporary educational crisis. With Bloom, Nash argues that American education has yielded to a closing of the mind and is failing miserably at imparting knowledge.

But Nash believes the crisis is more than this. What's really wrong with America's schools is a closing of the heart. American education consciously and systematically ignores moral and religious values. Consequently, American education produces morally illiterate, self-centered graduates ignorant of the first principles of religion and therefore incapable of applying ethical standards to what little knowledge they may have managed to gain.

All this results because educators still operate with the long debunked assumption that fact and value can and should be separated in order to attain knowledge. Educators propagate the lie of value "neutrality" or supposed "objectivity" while espousing philosophies like ethical relativism, secularism, positivism, naturalism, Marxism, humanism, and more recently deconstructionism. Since education is inescapably religious, what the guise of "neutrality" really means is that so-called "traditional values," particularly principles drawn from Christianity, are displaced in favor of alternative philosophies. As a result, concern for virtue is eliminated and objective knowable truth is lost to the subjectivism these philosophies inevitably produce.

Nash will win few friends in the "educational establishment." He attacks state teacher certification systems that over-emphasize methods and woefully under-emphasize content. Nash believes new teachers come to their first classroom assignments knowing something about how to teach but not knowing what or why to teach.

Unfortunately, American Christian education does not offer a consistently better alternative to public education. Nash likes the idea of Christian elementary and secondary schools but warns against a ghetto mentality of total isolation from the world and the American evangelical propensity to waffle back and forth between extremes of super-spirituality and anti-intellectualism.

While Nash lists some strengths of Christian colleges, he clearly believes that many of these institutions suffer from a debilitating theological and philosophical liberalism.

To recapture quality education, Nash argues: a) reinforce the educational role of the family, b) better prepare students, c) strengthen local control of school systems, d) give parents the freedom to choose between school districts.

Most importantly, Nash argues that moral, functional, and cultural literacy must not be separated. He believes modern education must recover a belief in a transcendent, universal moral order as defined by evangelical Christianity. For Christianity to provide this sacred canopy, Christians themselves must reaffirm the importance of supernatural, revealed, doctrinal truth in the Christian faith.

This book's primary weakness is the chapter on Evangelical colleges. Nash spends far too much of his time criticizing one professor's writings and one academic discipline that Nash claims are representative. Consequently, while Nash's assumptions are defensible, he ends up making broad generalizations that sound more like aspersions than logical conclusions.

Nash's book is decidedly refreshing. Unlike so many similar texts, this one offers some clear prescriptions for constructive change. Parents concerned about local school systems should read this book.

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